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THE CAMPAIGN WITH KUROPATKIN

THE CAMPAIGN WITH KUROPATKIN

BY DOUGLAS STORY

GENERAL KUROPATKIN IN RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR
ARTHUR RANSOME

LONDON: T. WERNER LAURIE
CLIFFORD'S INN, E.B.I. AND EDINBURGH
1905

General Kuropatkin.

GENERAL KUROPATKIN INSPECTING NEW ARRIVALS.

Photo by permission of Mr. C. E. Hands. *Frontispiece.*

THE CAMPAIGN WITH KUROPATKIN

BY DOUGLAS STORY

Fully illustrated from photographs taken by the Author

LONDON: T. WERNER LAURIE
PHILADELPHIA: J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
1905

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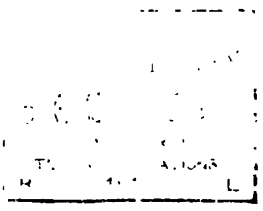

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TO MY CENSORS, RUSSIAN AND OTHER, THIS BOOK, IN ALL GOOD-FELLOWSHIP, IS DEDICATED.

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On the binding cover is a design of the Cross of St George, the highest reward in Russia for conspicuous valour in the presence of the enemy.

THE CAMPAIGN WITH KUROPATKIN

CHAPTER I

THE SHADOW BEFORE

On the evening of January 7, 1904, a brilliant dance was in progress in the City Hall at Hong Kong. The rooms were magnificent in their decoration, in the gay costumes of the dancers, in the bright uniforms of the men.

The 1st Sherwood Foresters were repaying their debt of hospitality to the hosts and hostesses of the Colony. It was a fitting night for the regimental *fête* of a fighting regiment. One word was in every one's mouth, and that word was "War." The feeling was the feeling at the Duchess of Richmond's ball in Brussels on the evening before Waterloo. The Heads of the Departments retired early. Staff-

officers were nervous. Juniors were eagerly seeking news. Surroundings and topics of conversation were alike warlike. Before the chair-coolies of the dancers had started on their long climb upward to the Peak, it was known that two hundred and fifty men of the regiment had been ordered to prepare for immediate embarkation, that the officers had been called away from their partners to receive instructions for active service, that the soldiers were bivouacked in field-kit. We fell asleep in the knowledge that peace between Russia and Japan had ceased to be a probability.

Next morning I was waked by a messenger bearing a cable—"Are you prepared act correspondent Front immediately?" In such fashion began my experience of the campaign with Kuropatkin.

The great matter for all of us was the extent to which Great Britain would be involved in the struggle. His Majesty's fleet was strong in Chinese waters. Every vessel was loaded to its utmost capacity with coal, and ammunition, and war stores. The gunners were working day and night at the fortifications of Hong Kong. Whatever should be the outcome

of the situation, Great Britain was prepared for battle, prepared to fulfil her part in that solemn undertaking of January 30, 1902, by which Britain undertook, "in the event of Japan becoming involved in war with another Power, and in the event of any other Power or Powers joining in the hostilities against her ally, to come to its assistance to conduct war in common, and to make peace in mutual agreement with it."

It were a poor friend who urged his ally into a struggle for which he was not adequately prepared, and it became us to examine very carefully the contrasting strengths of Russia and Japan at the crisis. On the sea Japan was the stronger with her eight battleships, six armoured cruisers, six cruisers of over twenty knots, twelve cruisers of over sixteen knots, two gunboats of over twenty knots—in all representing a tonnage of 210,036; as against Russia with her nine battleships, five armoured cruisers, eight cruisers of over twenty knots, one cruiser of over sixteen knots, two gunboats of over twenty knots —in all representing a tonnage of 208,886. In smaller types Japan was even stronger with her nineteen destroyers, two armoured coast-defence

ships, nineteen other coast-defence ships, and eighty-five torpedo boats; as against Russia's thirty-two destroyers, ten coast-defence ships, and fourteen torpedo boats. Number is not everything in naval warfare. Japan—with her *Yashima* and *Fuji* built to make eighteen knots, 12,000-ton ships, with armour from fourteen to eighteen inches thick, and carrying four 12-inch and ten 6-inch rifles with twenty 12-pounders; with her *Mikase*, *Hatuse*, *Asahi*, and *Shikishima*, 15,000 tons, eighteen knots, fourteen inches of armour, four 12-inch rifles, fourteen 6-inch quick-firers, and twenty 12-pounders in the main battery—was more than a match for Russia with her *Petropavlosk*, *Peresviet*, *Osliabya* and *Pobieda*, 11,000- and 12,000-ton ships carrying four 12-inch rifles, twelve 6-inch quick-firers or four 10-inch rifles, and eleven 6-inch quick-firers, besides secondary batteries. Japan's armoured cruisers, of the *Asawa* class, 10,000-tons, twenty-three knots, 7-inch armour, four 8-inch rifles, fourteen 6-inch quick-firers, and twelve 12-pounders were unrivalled on the high sea. Against these, Russia had two twelve-year-old armoured cruisers, the *Rurik* and *Dmitri Donskoi*, and the more modern *Admiral Nahimoff* and

Pamiat Azova, with one other recently sent to Chinese waters.

Those are the bald figures of the respective naval strengths, but they tend but little to an elucidation of the situation. Russia's ships were built with large coal-bunkers to compensate for her lack of coaling stations. Japan's ships had little coal-carrying capacity, but stout armour and heavy guns. Japan had five Government docks, four of which were capable of taking the largest battleships, and, in addition, a dozen private docks. Russia had docks at Vladivostok—ice-bound for another four months —and at Port Arthur. Japan had an inexhaustible supply of local coal. Russia had large supplies of coal sea-borne or railway-borne. Every port in Japan was a coaling station for her own fleet. Russia had but two ice-free ports at which she could replenish her bunkers. Japan had a magnificent modern merchant fleet. Russia had practically no mercantile marine in Chinese waters. With the exception of the newly-purchased Argentine cruisers, the *Nyssin* and the *Kasuga*, Japan had all her fleet at hand. Russia had much of her force in the Mediterranean and the Baltic.

The statistics of the respective nations' strength on land was vastly different from that of their force at sea. Russia's military strength in time of peace was 1,100,000, with 42,000 officers. Japan's military strength in time of peace was 135,533 men, with 8,116 officers. In war-time, the Russians could place in the field 4,500,000 men and 75,000 officers, for whom were provided 560,000 horses. In war-time, the Japanese could place in the field 392,220 men, with 1,098 guns, consisting of 171 battalions, 43 squadrons, and 71 batteries; inclusive of the reserves, Landwehr and Landsturm—a total of 509,960 men. Four and a half millions against half a million!

The Japanese army was composed of magnificent fighting material, the men were patriots to the youngest drummer-boy, the officers were highly accomplished and of great intelligence. The Japanese infantry was the best arm in the Service, smart, neat, intelligent, well-disciplined, and capable of wonderful endurance. The Japanese artillery possessed excellent guns copied from Krupp, but was badly horsed. The cavalry was poor, the horses small and badly bred, the men indifferent riders. The Russian infantryman was big, heavy, unkempt,

stolid, slow, but a wonderful fighting machine, and behind entrenchments a tenacious fighter. Russia was well supplied with guns, had 138,000 men in her European artillery and 15,000 men in her Asiatic artillery upon a peace basis, her horses were probably the best field horses in the world. Russia's cavalry, on a peace footing, numbered 116,000 men in European Russia, and 14,000 men in Asiatic Russia, all magnificently horsed, and every man a born rider.

Much has been made by commentators upon the comparative appearance of the Russian and the Japanese forces in China during the Boxer troubles of 1900. This was unfair as a criterion of the complete armies of the respective Powers. Japan sent a picked detachment armed with everything that was most modern in her equipment, fitted with every modern convenience from her stores. Russia sent her ordinary work-a-day troops without special equipment. The official list of casualties sustained by the Japanese in the engagements in the course of the relief march to Peking shows how extremely meagre were the data available at this juncture on which to base an appreciation of the Japanese as a fighting force:—Killed—forty-six

men and three horses. Wounded—fifteen officers, two hundred and thirty-three men, and four horses. Men missing—twelve. Ammunition consumed—769 rounds artillery, 77,247 rounds rifle, and 6 pistol shots. Prisoners taken—eighty men and two horses. The Japanese impressed everyone with their soldierly bearing, their strict discipline, their endurance, and their smartness; but the experiment was not sufficiently exhaustive to afford a basis for the computation of the chances against an enemy of the stamp of Russia in the field.

The great problem was what to do with these vast forces—Japan with her 210,036 tons of war-ships, and half a million men; Russia with her 208,886 tons of war-ships, and four and a half million men. A famous military observer had said that the "foundation of the strategical future will be the command of the sea." The words were true if the opposing fleets came into action in full force; but the object of the two nations was vastly different. Russia's base was on land; Japan's base was at sea. Russia's line of communications was the land route from the interior to the terminations of the Siberian Railway. Japan's line of communications was

THE MULE MARKET, NEWCHWANG.

SIBERIAN FIELD ARTILLERY.

the sea route from Japan to her fighting force. If Russia used her fleet to oppose the Japanese landing, and were defeated, Japan would no longer have reason to fear for the continuity of her line of communications. If, however, Russia used her land batteries and shore forces to oppose the Japanese landing, the Russian fleet would remain a menace to every vulnerable point upon the Japanese coast, a danger to every convoy, a constant peril to her line of communications. Japan abounded in coast ports, and every one was a vulnerable point of attack. Russia possessed only three ports, and of these the largest and most important was invulnerable throughout the winter months. Russia had no coaling stations, but every Japanese port was a possible coaling station for the enemy when the home fleet was out at sea.

The Spanish-American War taught the moral effect upon an enemy of a cruising fleet that cannot be localised. That effect would be felt by Japan so long as one Russian battleship remained afloat. It was not a matter of Japan acting purely on the offensive and Russia merely in defence. If Russia assumed the offensive at sea, Japan would present an infinity of mercan-

tile ships as prizes, innumerable ports as points of attack. Russia's coast towns were, one and all, fortresses designed to resist attack. Japan's coast towns were ordinary cities, more or less hastily fortified. So long as there were ships to be taken, towns to be sacked, Russia needed not to depend upon her coaling stations for her supplies of fuel. It is cheaper, and may be as handy, to seize coal from the enemy as to lay it up for oneself.

Japan did not possess such superiority over Russia at sea as to permit her to convoy an army to Manchuria and at the same time defend her coasts from attack by sea. If, on the other hand, Russia's fleet were utterly destroyed, her ports at Dalny, Port Arthur, and Vladivostok captured, Japan's task would merely have begun. She would have sunk Russia's fleet, captured her coast cities; but she would only have sunk Russia's fleet, captured her coast cities—that, and nothing more. Russia was not China, and her history in the past showed that initial defeat and terrible losses had no effect to stay her from her purpose.

Supposing that Japan landed her army in safety upon the Manchurian coast; supposing

her line of sea communications were absolutely safe from risk of severance by Russia, the war would only just have started. Japan would have harmed no vital part of Russia, would have made no slightest impression upon Manchuria. Then would begin the war of the half million against the four and a half millions; the war of Japan's infantry against Russia's steppe-bred cavalry; the war of the force advancing ever farther from its base against the force retreating back upon itself, upon its reinforcements and its supplies; the war of the army swallowed up in a strange land against the army secure in its chosen positions, aware of its strategic strength, secure in its line of retreat.

Eventually, if, by a miracle, Japan did force Russia backward out of Manchuria, she would have achieved merely a land frontier constantly menaced by a malignant foe upon the other side. She would have fought a war, and made an enemy. To advise such a course seemed but little the office of a friend.

There was an impression abroad in the Japanese Press that Russia was merely bluffing; that when Japan sent her ultimatum she would

withdraw from Manchuria; that Russia feared Japan. If the granite boulder feared the lashing of the rainstorm there would have been justification for this confidence. For once the copy-book seemed right—Discretion was the better part of Valour. Japan's success appeared to lie by the graded path of diplomacy, not by the bloody field of battle. Russia did not want war. She did not believe in the possibility of war. She despised her enemy. Japan had a firm friend and powerful ally in Great Britain. Russia was without a friend in the world. She stood alone. France had no intention of becoming embroiled in the Far East. She had recently learned the value of a commercial friendship with Great Britain, had sadly counted the cost of a sentimental alliance with Russia.

We discussed those matters in the days before the war; Russia founded a theory upon them, Japan realised them and laid her plans to meet them.

CHAPTER II

PEACE OR WAR?

SUCCEEDING our day of crisis in Hong Kong came days that lengthened into weeks of suspense. We had time to survey the political situation. Neither nation was in a sufficiently sound financial position to justify the purchase of battleships which would not speedily be used, or to mobilise vast armies for mere amusement's sake. Russia's public debt was over £700,000,000, and Japan's debt was £50,000,000. Yet were these two nations embarking in fresh expenditure, purchasing stores, arming battalions, fitting great battleships. Such movements might be adjuncts to diplomacy, but they seemed rather the preparation for what must follow after diplomacy had failed.

The question resolved itself into a definition of the final aim of the nations' respective diplomacies. If Japan would be content with

Korea, she might expect to receive it by purely diplomatic machination. If she demanded the absolute evacuation of Manchuria by Russia, she might rest assured that no amount of diplomatic representation or of diplomatic tergiversation would avail to move Russia one foot backward. The words of the political editor of the *Novoe Vremya* indicated a policy, whether they represented the truth or not was immaterial to the development of the situation:

"We took Manchuria by force of arms in a war called forth not by Russia, but by the missionaries and traders of Western Europe. Every step of our advance, marked by the blood of our sons, becomes an inalienable part of our Empire. Any retreat for us is impossible."

Such was Russia's position, and Russia's bulk lent the words weight. It was patent to the world that Manchuria, with its 400,000 square miles of territory, would form a magnificent colonising ground for Japan. It was patent to the world that, but for her ports at Dalny and Port Arthur, and the way thither, Russia had no need of Manchuria. Between the Volga and the Yellow Sea were 5000 miles of sparsely populated country crying for settlers. The

density of population in Russia was less than one-sixth that of Japan. Japan's population was eighteen times as dense as that of Manchuria. Japan needed the land; Russia held it. There the whole question was focussed. It might be taken as granted that Russia could not be moved by cajolery or threats out of Manchuria. Only force could effect her dislodgement. The matter for consideration, then, was whether Japan so much needed Manchuria that she would risk her national existence to obtain it, or was she prepared to rest satisfied with Korea, already quite sufficiently populated?

To move Russia out of Manchuria by diplomatic or persuasive means seemed impossible. Her method of moving in was too deliberate, too carefully planned. Ten years ago Russia was busily engaged training a corps of administrators for Manchuria, educating them in the language of the country, preparing them for the posts they would afterwards occupy and for the work of organisation. In 1894, Russia frustrated Japan in her endeavour to secure the fruits of her victory over China. In 1898, the Czar obtained a railway concession over Manchuria one clause of which gave to the Russian Govern-

ment the right to protect its railroad by force of arms. The guards required permanent barracks, fortified posts, and the location of garrisons. The Boxer outbreak of 1900 demanded the occupation of Manchuria by Russian troops. Each of the other allies withdrew its army of occupation at the cessation of the trouble. Russia lingered in Manchuria. The Powers protested.

Russia negotiated a treaty with China, setting October 8, 1903, as the date of the final withdrawal of her troops. The day came, and with it the withdrawal of the army of occupation; but the railway guards of like numbers, of like constitution, of like armament, remained. The fortified posts had been strengthened; strategic points had been fortified; the inhabitants of Manchuria knew no difference between the guards of the railway and the army of occupation. Neither did the Japanese. Russia rested in armed possession of Manchuria by right of a treaty granted her by weak and fatuous China. She offered to Japan, in exchange for Japan's non-interference in Manchuria, the conditional occupation of Korea. What the conditions were no one knew. Japan had shown no

THE SIBERIAN INFANTRYMAN IN WINTER.

SOLDIERS RESTING AFTER THEIR INSPECTION BY GENERAL KUROPATKIN.

eagerness to accept them or, indeed, to accept Korea in any form as a *quid pro quo*. Russia did not appear likely to repeat the error of Great Britain in South Africa, nor had under-armament at any period of her history been her fault. Russia occupied a strong position in Manchuria, a position which, by the strict letter of her treaty with China, she was justified in occupying.

Japan had been jockeyed out of Manchuria. Korea was little likely to satisfy her. It was too small. It was too crowded. It was too close to her enemy in Manchuria to be at any time comfortable. Could she push Russia out of Manchuria? It seemed impossible. Russia was very firmly fixed; had her base inland, not seaward; occupied positions specially chosen to resist attack from Japan. Japan's strength depended absolutely upon her fleet, and in that she was powerful to a remarkable degree. Russia, without any fleet, or with her Far Eastern fleet, possessed a marvellously strong position in virtue of her mass, her lack of a vulnerable point, and her ever-present means of retreat back upon herself. Recent warfare has proved the danger of a long line of communica-

tions, the handicap to an army whose advance lengthens her line of communication, whose advance draws her ever farther away from her base. Japan's base was the sea. Russia's base was the Volga. Were Japan to thrust Russia back out of Manchuria, Russia would still remain active upon her borders waiting her chance to advance again. Japan had not the money or the men to withstand eternally the grinding force of Russia's mass upon her borders. Germany had felt it; Austria had felt it; Great Britain had felt it; and these three were richer and more numerous than Japan.

It was no question of sentiment or of morality which Japan was called upon to decide. It was a question of the heavier battalions, of the purpose to which those battalions were to be put, and of the situation which would be created after the struggle. One by one the optimists lost faith in a peaceful solution of the Far Eastern crisis. President Roosevelt joined the ranks of the pessimists, and acknowledged that he saw no way whereby war might be averted. The United States had differed from Great Britain in its policy towards Russia. It early realised that with the first opening of Siberia

a great avenue was thrown open to Western trade. It knew that Great Britain, by reason of its traditional policy, was little likely to benefit by the new market, and it threw itself with enthusiasm into the development of Vladivostok and the Trans-Siberian Railway. American locomotives, American bridges, American steel rails were rushed into Asiatic Russia, and for a time American traders coined money in Siberia.

Even on the brink of war the United States Government was averse to pronouncing any actual opposition to Russian expansion towards the Sea of Japan. The sentiment of the people, however, was less commercial than that of the Government, and Americans were declaring with no uncertain voice from the platform, and in the press, their national sympathy with Japan. Had the United States been willing earlier to forego the profits of her enterprise, to join with Great Britain in protest, the situation might never have been strained. As matters were, Great Britain might count upon the co-operation of the United States in whatever policy she might consider the exigencies of the situation demanded. The United States had

not forgotten her interest in the Philippines, had not forgotten that she might yet evacuate those islands and turn them over to the local government of the Filipinos, had not forgotten that the Philippines were excellent coaling stations for a Power located in Manchuria and Korea, had not forgotten that Russia was an aggressive Power inspired by a wolfish land-hunger.

The London *Times* had urged the active participation of Great Britain in the possible war. To those who regarded the *Times* as the Thunderer of the years of the Crimea, this advocacy might be taken as representative of a national policy. The *Times*, however, no longer swayed the Government in foreign affairs. It possessed racial and religious antipathies to the Russian Government which were not necessarily the sentiments of the nation as a whole. The Kishineff massacre was denounced by the whole world of civilisation, but not all the world was associated with the *Times* in its explanation of that outrage. Recently, the *Times* had felt itself personally insulted by the Russian Government in consequence of the expulsion of its correspondent from St Petersburg. In its rage it had hurled denunciations against

the British Ambassador at the Court of the Czar which were unfounded and undeserved. Its attitude on the existing crisis was not the attitude which the authoritative journal of Great Britain would have adopted. Britain did not desire war, and the best informed of the British in the Far East dreaded the effects of war upon their ally, Japan. The *Times* was justified of its remark that, "if war comes, we must watch vigilantly and be prepared to protect our interests"; but there was a wide difference between maintaining our prestige in the Far East and engaging in active warfare with Russia. No progressive Power desired to see Japan "obliterated or reduced to the rank of a second-rate Power"; but, if Japan's position might be maintained without recourse to war, it was Britain's duty to urge her to settle her difference by peaceful means.

Britain's responsibility in the East was sufficient without having added to it the prejudices of the journal which was wrongly considered the official organ of the Government. Years ago the *Times* yielded that position to younger and less commercially enterprising newspapers. Unfortunately, those things are not

realised by foreign nations, and the pronouncements of the *Times* still have some hollow echo of the old-time Thunderer. To those of us who most calmly measured Great Britain's responsibility in the matter pending between Russia and Japan, it was difficult to see that she was of necessity impelled into war. Japan was about to fight ostensibly for the purpose of compelling Russia to maintain her promise made to the allies in 1900. That promise was made to Great Britain as much as to Japan; and Great Britain had not deemed it necessary to go to war on her own behalf. The position then was that Britain, as ally of Japan, might be forced to adopt a course which Britain, in her own right, was not prepared to follow. It was a curious commentary upon the awkward consequences of alliances.

Britain realised that the Trans-Siberian route, as then constituted, was capable of doing a great good to the world at large, and to herself in particular. She realised that were Japan, or Britain and Japan combined, to drive Russia out of Manchuria, the railway from Paris to Port Arthur would no longer be available. Russia was a jealous nation, carefully conserv-

ing her own rights, and it was little likely that the nation which constructed a railway from continent limit to continent limit, for developmental and military purposes, would consent to join her system with that of an unfriendly nation which had usurped her place in Manchuria.

Russia designed the railroad for the conveyance of troops, built it of a gauge that kept it apart from the railway systems of the world, made of it a personal thing. Chinese imports totalled some £36,000,000 per annum, and of these Great Britain contributed £30,000,000, the United States £3,500,000, the whole of the European Continent, inclusive of Russia, £2,500,000. It was not the claims of her Chinese trade that led Russia to construct her railroad. It was not the claims of the rest of the world that would induce her to connect her trunk line through Siberia with Japan's trunk line through Manchuria, should that territory, as the result of war, become Japanese. The breach of continuity would be the world's, not Russia's, loss. In these circumstances the importance of President Roosevelt's change of attitude was realised. Optimism dies hard when the pocket is affected, and war is rarely

prophesied by him who would benefit most by peace.

The best possible result of a war would leave Japan in constant contact with a strong and malignant enemy. Japan could not permanently cripple Russia. It was impossible for her to reach so vital a part as did David in his duel with Goliath; she might at most wound a finger or a foot. On the other hand, the mere exertion of war would seriously exhaust Japan. Should Russia win even the semblance of a victory at sea or on land, it would incapacitate Japan for years from following the true course of her development. Japan had had forty years in which to make herself a nation. She needed many fat years of peace in which to strengthen and enrich that nation. Japan as a nation is proud, chivalrous, big-hearted. She felt that her national honour was at stake in this crisis, and she was prepared to risk her national existence in its vindication.

Yet Japan could have withdrawn from the dispute without having received one solitary concession from Russia, and still have endangered not one atom of her national prestige. Japan had demanded that Russia

Staff-Captain Baron von Hoven. Staff-Captain Thérèmin.

THE CENSORS.

The Author.

THE FIRST CORRESPONDENTS IN LIAO YANG.

Photo by permission of Mr. C. E. Hands.

should remain true to her sworn promise to evacuate Manchuria. Russia had refused. Japan had come very near to the point at which she would undertake to force Russia to keep faith with the allies. Therein lay the crux of the situation. Russia was breaking faith not only with Japan, but with Great Britain, the United States, France, and Germany. These are older and more puissant Powers than Japan; yet no one of them had seen fit to try conclusions with Russia in Manchuria because of her breach of faith with them. Had Japan retired from her position in the month of January, she would have occupied the same position as did the four Great Powers with whom she was associated at the time Russia gave her solemn undertaking to evacuate Manchuria after the signing of the Peace Protocol. To that extent was Japanese honour perfectly safe in the hands of her critics.

Japan, indeed, need have made no extreme retrogression. All the essentials of diplomatic victory were in her possession. Marquis Ito and his colleagues were sufficiently shrewd diplomats to manipulate the circumstances to Japan's advantage. Russia did not desire war in the

Far East. She had a sufficiency of difficulties upon her German and Austrian frontiers, in the Balkans, in Persia, in Afghanistan and Tibet, to monopolise her energies without engaging in battle with so stout and vigorous an opponent as Japan. Russia had a big war-chest, but it was not filled with the expectation of being depleted by a war with Japan. Ever since 1879 Russia had been laying aside money in preparation for war, but the anticipated struggle was with Germany or Great Britain or Turkey, not with Japan. Russia had no desire to dissipate her savings in war with a nation that, a quarter of a century ago, was not included in the calculations of the Powers.

Russia did not desire war with Japan, because she knew the war would be long and bloody; beause she knew the sympathy of the world was with the younger and the smaller contestant; because she knew that her pre-occupation in the Far East would be accompanied by British activity in Persia, in Afghanistan, and in Tibet, by a weakening of her influence in the Near East, by the subordination of her authority in the Concert of Europe. Russia did not want war in the Far East, because she had gained her

end there, and war could bring her nothing but expense and loss. Russia did not want war in the Far East, because her solitary ally in Europe — France — was not concerned in the development of Russian interests there. Russia did not want war in the Far East, because the supreme authority in Russia, the Czar, was a Man of Peace, a man opposed to war, sanctioning it only when it was unavoidable. Russia did not want war in the Far East, because she knew that victory would be but a barren triumph. She learned her lesson at the Berlin Congress in 1878, and was well aware that, when weakened by war, even though triumphant, a Congress of the Powers would in all probability prevent her taking advantage of her victory, would enforce the independence of Korea, might even demand the evacuation of Manchuria in accordance with her promise of 1900. Therein lay the strength of Japan's diplomatic position. Even though she died in her struggle, yet in her death would she triumph. It rested with Japan's statesmen to secure the benefits of that triumph without risking extinction.

It was apparent that, to the Great Powers, Japan was rather to be encouraged into war

than to be withheld from it. She might drag the chestnuts out of the fire at the expense of her own scorched fingers, and the other Powers would not be averse to share in the consumption of them. Great Britain had long ago signified her desire to maintain the integrity of China, the independence of Korea; Germany wanted no aggressive Power in the neighbourhood of her coaling station at Kiao Chau; the United States was fearful of her Philippine Islands, was concerned with Britain in the preservation of the Open Door. No one of these was inclined to tackle Russia single-handed, other interests and jealousies prevented their acting in concert; but all were willing to share in the dispersal of the spoils once Japan should have emptied Russia's war-chest. Japan might as well have enjoyed these spoils while her appetite was good and her constitution healthy, as after the battle in the guise of a debilitated and dismembered veteran. Russia would have conceded much to avoid a contest. Baron von Rosen, the Russian ambassador at the court of the Mikado, had orders, in the event of his recall from Tokio, to proceed at once to Port Arthur and continue negotiations from

there. Japan might have confined her demands to matters that would enhance her prestige, improve her position, without trenching upon those affairs which Russia had decided she would not grant.

Japan had declared that she was entirely uninfluenced by any aggressive tendency either in China or Korea. There was nothing in the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement that she could not have attained at this time without recourse to arms. Russia would have declined to evacuate Manchuria, but she would have conceded an Open Door. Russia would have granted Japan whatever she sought in Korea, thereby saving Japan the menace of a Russian naval port on her southern coast. The situation was full of possibilities; and Marquis Ito had not forgotten the events of 1895, and the disappointments of victory. He at least realised how much more bitter would be the fruits of defeat. The situation was perfectly capable of adjustment—of adjustment to the advantage of Japan. Japan might have learned much from the patient diplomacy of Russia, from the statecraft that believes half a loaf to be better than no bread at all. Japan, by the exercise

of patience and compromise, could have obtained from the situation a loaf that would have been in no respect distinguishable from the loaf she desired to wrest by force of arms.

Those things were so, but Japan was eager for war. War was imminent, yet no man might say what the war was about. Russia was in possession of Manchuria; but Manchuria belonged to China, and China had not appointed Japan her champion. Japan was wroth with Russia for having failed to fulfil her solemn undertakings with the Powers, but Japan was not going to war to vindicate a principle. Russia had declared her intention of remaining in command of Manchuria, but Japan had never avowed her intention of taking Manchuria. Japan had need of an outlet for her surplus population, but she never had declared her intention of finding it in Korea or Manchuria. Russia had no need of territory, but much need of money. Japan had need of both money and territory. Neither nation had thought war would relieve the financial situation of its stringency. Japan declared it was not land-hunger that was propelling her into war. Russia declared she desired only peace with all the

world. Yet were these two nations about to plunge into war, and no man might say the reason of the plunge. It was not to test their naval armament, because both nations are practical, and both had had enough of war. It was not to try their men, because both nations had tested their armies in the field. It was not for glory, because Russia had long since earned her laurels in battle, and Japan had evoked the admiration of the world as a military nation. It was not for land, because Russia had a sufficiency, and Japan said she was seeking no more.

CHAPTER III

WAR

So we argued, and so we weighed the chances of the adversaries in the balance of our comprehension. Japan, too, was debating those matters, adjusting the scales to meet the necessities of her situation. On Friday, February 5, she decided to recall her Ministers from St Petersburg. Russia's reply to her demand was hasting on its way *viâ* Port Arthur and the Court of the Viceroy, but Japan wanted no further palaver. She must obtain the command of the sea before Russia could conserve her naval advantage there. So, before Baron von Rosen had received the intimation of his recall from Tokio, on the morning of February 6, Admiral Togo had sailed from Saseho with his entire fleet for the appointed rendezvous off Mokpo. With him were the transports conveying the invading force to Korea.

A LAMAIST SOLDIER OF THE CZAR.

THE LAMA PRIESTS AT THEIR DEVOTIONS.

Much discussion has taken place as to the etiquette of Japan's first blow at Chemulpo on the afternoon of February 8. That discussion is futile. The first act of war was not the shot from the *Korietz* on the evening of February 8, it was the sailing of Admiral Togo's fleet on the morning of February 6. From that hour no human agency could stay the war. Baron von Rosen had orders to proceed to Port Arthur to continue negotiations. Russia had not exhausted the sum of her concession. Japan had closed her ears to overtures of peace. For ten years she had prepared for a declaration of war with Russia, and now, with the *Gromoboi*, the *Rossia*, the *Rurik*, and the *Bogatyr* in Vladivostok harbour, the *Varyag* and *Korietz* isolated at Chemulpo, the *Mandjour* cut off at Shanghai, the moment had come to precipitate it.

In real war there can be no rule. War is a licence to kill one's enemy; it is in itself a breach of all international law, and neither precedent nor treaty may be quoted with respect to the conduct of it. No breadth of parchment will avail to stay the effect of a drawn trigger or a launched torpedo. Japan knew this, and put her faith in deeds, not words.

There is to me, however, something very terrible, something very ominous for the future, in the thought of the luncheon party at Port Arthur on Sunday, February 7. The principal figures are two men—Admiral Alexeieff, courteous, chivalrous, Western, and the Japanese Consul from Chefoo, soft-spoken, inscrutable, Oriental. The Viceroy is dispensing hospitality to the man whom he would make an agent of peace. The Consul, alone aware of the training of Admiral Togo's guns on the batteries of Port Arthur, for the last time is studying the characteristics of the leaders of his nation's enemy. To my mind it is not a pretty picture, but it is terribly symbolical of all that has happened in the Far East since first Japan determined upon war.

On February 10 I was on board the R.M.S. *Empress of India* in Hong Kong harbour. The news came off from the British flagship that war had broken out, that Russia had lost two ships at Chemulpo, and an unknown number at Port Arthur. That was the subject of ship's gossip until I reached Shanghai on February 13.

Shanghai was mad, the town was hysterical; eleven Russian warships had been sunk, five had

been captured, Viceroy Alexeieff had broken down as a result of the catastrophe, his mind had given way. He had been hustled out, a nervous wreck, to Harbin. The war at its very commencement had ended. Japan had occupied Port Arthur and Vladivostok. It only remained for her to dictate terms for Russia's evacuation of Manchuria. My brain reeled. It was not until I recalled my experience in other wars, until I remembered what I had seen in my journey across Siberia and Manchuria, until I calculated the resources of Russia, until I repeated to myself the reputation of the Russian soldier man in the Napoleonic wars, in the Swedish wars, in the Crimea, in Turkestan, that I realised the fallibility of the news upon the Bund at Shanghai. I hurried back to my steamer and re-shipped to Nagasaki. We reached the great southern port of Japan at daybreak on Monday, February 15. The relief was intense. Out of the whirlpool I had passed into the steady, practical current of the mill-race.

The Japanese entered upon their war with Russia in an unemotional, methodical manner that prognosticated success more surely than did the victories at Port Arthur and Chemulpo.

Once I had passed out of the hysteria of Shanghai into the calm determination of Nagasaki, I realised that I had crossed from the region of the spectator into the sphere of the actor. In Shanghai, rumour tripped over rumour in its eagerness to race along the Bund. In Japan, a dignified silence covered the situation. Rumour was relegated to its appointed place — the newspaper — and men in authority courteously indicated the gravity of the position as the cause of their reserve. The pushful correspondent had not a friend in Japan.

The keynote to the Japanese character was struck by Admiral Togo in his despatch to the Department of the Navy upon the action of February 9: "Officers and men were as cool as in manœuvres."

Twelve transports lay in the harbour of Nagasaki on the morning of February 15. By evening ten of them had been despatched laden with men, and horses, and equipment. The embarkation was managed without excitement or disorder.

Six days before, on February 9, railhead was two miles from the landing-stages at

Nagasaki. By Saturday morning a railway had been laid down, platforms built, turn-tables erected, and a telegraph line organised. Soldiers were entrained at their depôts, detrained at the docks, and rowed on board their transports without hurry, without noise, without confusion. The coolie class gazed at them from a respectful distance, but not until the children were freed from school was there to be heard even an incidental "Banzai!" The men were neither morose nor excited. They were bright and contented, with a happy grin upon their faces, but without sign of nervous glee or anxious apprehension. The war they were going to was as the manœuvres in which they previously had been exercised.

The method of the Japanese was apparent in their treatment of their ally, Great Britain. Japan was taking no chances. She submitted the great British liners to the same rigid examination as she did the vessels of less certain friends. They might not enter her ports by night. They must steam through the Straits at reduced speed and by daylight. They must make sworn declaration that they carried no Russian passenger on board.

From Nagasaki to Kobe should be a run of eighteen hours. It had lengthened to thirty hours. I passed through the Strait of Simonoseki at daybreak of February 16. It was a cold, grey morning, with the mist hanging heavy on the hills. On either side of those Kyles of Japan guns were mounted to the number of at least a hundred. Watchful Japanese sentries loomed up out of the half-light. Crowds of coolies could be distinguished at work on new fortifications. The channel was understood to be well mined, and entrance to the Inland Sea by way of it was practically impossible to a hostile fleet.

While the day was yet young, and before the full light had revealed the distance, the black bodies of six great transports came shadowily into view. They were waiting for light to make the entrance. As I watched, they manœuvred into column, and proceeded rapidly in single file to their appointed destination. All were empty of men, standing high out of the water. Two were fitted with deck-houses for horses. When it is remembered that each transport carried from 1,500 to 2,000 men, and that, the evening before, ten transports fully laden had

sailed from Nagasaki, the vast bodies of men Japan was mobilising may be realised. The statement was that all were bound for Chemulpo; but Japan believes in surprises, and the declared destination was almost certainly the false destination. It is only necessary to remember that each of those convoys represented a body of from 15,000 to 20,000 men to recognise the size of the army Japan was placing thus early in the field. Embarkation was going on simultaneously at three points in a quiet, businesslike manner that showed the Japanese plan of campaign was definite and arranged.

In surveying the first movements of the war it is necessary to keep Japan's objective clearly in view. Japan was not only determined to crush Russia's power in the Far East, but to establish her ascendancy over China. To that end her preliminary steps were directed. Russia sought to overawe China by occupying Mukden, the sacred city of the Manchus. Japan sought to impress China with the inflated nature of Russia's pretensions, and, to make the impression permanent, struck at once at Port Arthur. The blow was diplomatic rather than warlike. It was aimed at Russian prestige rather than

at Russian arms. It succeeded. Japan believed in herself. She believed she could beat Russia at sea and in the field; but she knew that without Chinese co-operation she could not hope to retain the results of her victories. To gain that co-operation was the object of the first moves in the protracted game of war.

The war, as seen from Tokio, was a very Oriental conflict. There was no bustle, no hurry, no unmannerly obtrusion of engines of war to mar the placidity of Japanese life in the capital. The people went about their ordinary business. The curio shops captured their customary hauls of globe-trotters. The geishas weaved their dance tapestries in the tea-houses. In the streets one occasionally saw an overloaded ambulance train wending weariedly to the railway. In the squares bodies of men were drilling quietly, purposefully, without apparent expectation of employment at the Front. At the station was a rare bunch of squat, little, brown-faced nurses, bound for the distant lands where rumour stated that men were hurt and dying. Nowhere was there sense of reality about the scene. The soldiers were fattened messenger boys. The nurses were the

THE ENTRANCE GATE TO THE IMPERIAL TOMBS.

THE COURTYARD BEFORE THE TOMBS.

elder lasses from the Foundling Hospital. It was hard to believe that those little people were filled with the hopes, the ambitions, the hatreds of grown-ups.

Of correspondents there was a plenty in Tokio—forty in a single hotel. Of news there was not a vestige. The Japanese were silent as sphinxes, patient as the pyramids, impenetrable as the Sahara. One man or a dozen of men knew the truth at the Navy Department, the Army Department, or the Foreign Office. Their colleagues were ignorant, as we were ignorant, and the populace squandered its pence on "extras" that but emphasised the general lack of knowledge.

One day — February 25 — an "extra" was published in Tokio. It represented the news of a week, the pabulum of two score hungry correspondents :—

"We have reason to believe that another naval engagement took place at Port Arthur, probably on the 23rd.

"The authorities are on the tiptoe of expectation as to the result."

It was not an illuminating communication. It was little relieved from the perilous un-

certainty of the ordinary street rumour. Yet was it official, and forty correspondents racked their brains to find some mental mechanism whereby the bald announcement might be transmitted into special information from the Front.

The correspondents did not like this work. They were as honest as their predecessors, as enterprising, as ambitious; but the slow evil of the East was pressing upon their souls and paralysing them. Their nerves reacted to the strain, and Japan, eventually, will pay the penalty.

One morning, while I was in Tokio, I saw a correspondent, whose campaigns numbered some score and a half, jump six inches out of his chair when the waiter let a knife slip to the floor. Yet in another place have I seen that man eat unconcernedly the while shells were screaming their death-messages about his head. It is ill to tune a man, keyed to the quick time of a tarantella, to the measured movements of a Japanese posture dance.

Japan has still far to march along the path of civilisation ere she attain to an understanding of the Western man's thoughts and methods.

The bluntness of Anglo-Saxon speech is not for men schooled to the procrastination of "Augustness," and "Excellency," and "Honourable Lord." The Japanese censor was shocked at the brusque utterances of British and American scribes, and cables uncouched in the courteous phraseology of courts had little chance of ever attaining to their destination.

With time all this will re-act upon Japan. The empire, sooner or later, must depend upon the great English-speaking nations for protection from the glacier power of Russia. When that day comes she will turn to the men who at the commencement of the war she was thwarting and obstructing, and will marvel at their unresponsiveness. Japan acclaims to the world her civilisation and her progress. They are but the lacquer on her barbarism. Liberty of thought, of opinion, of action, is unknown in Nippon. A free Press were as much a marvel in Japan as a mastodon in Hyde Park. Comment is crushed, criticism killed in Japan. The man who would speak his mind fairly and freely must place the Yellow Sea between him and the Mikado ere he write one word in opposition. A war east of Suez is no war for the hustler.

In the Land of the Lotus, the lotus-eater is the most successful correspondent.

In the office of the Chief of Staff at the Ministry of War in Tokio was a board laid out in squares intersected by lines and cross lines. On it were pieces like draughtsmen. Those pieces represented units of the Japanese army. On that board were worked out the combinations that made Japan's play in the grim game of battle. War is a business in Japan—cold, deliberate, scientific. To the men of responsibility the soldiers at the Front are no longer human. They are but pieces on the draught-board in the War Office at Tokio.

I quickly received my official recognition as a correspondent accredited to the forces of Japan, but twenty-four hours availed to assure me that the war plans of the Japanese had no place for *attachés* or correspondents. Draught-board war risks no interruptions from the indiscretions of spectators. I hurried back as quickly as steam would carry me to Shanghai and the North.

CHAPTER IV

NEWCHWANG

SHANGHAI was hysterical as ever on my return there from Tokio. Its bombardments of Port Arthur succeeded each other with the rapidity of the shots from a Maxim gun. It even succeeded in producing an evacuation of the Port and its destruction at the hands of the Russians!

My return visit was principally interesting because of the opportunity it gave of an audience with Prince Pu Lun, the Heir Apparent to the Chinese throne. The Prince was on his way to the St Louis Exposition, and fresh from the restraint of the Forbidden City. He was intensely engrossed in his first impressions of Western life. I found him a gentleman, remarkably acute, extremely observant, and somewhat diffident of manner. He typified the new generation in Cathay. He was no moral and physical wreck, as is his brother, but a man

strong and independent of character, well able to consolidate the million interests of China in one national ambition when once he is given the chance.

Events in Manchuria cannot but have an enormous effect upon the future policy of such a man as Pu Lun. The Yellow Peril is not a peril of advancing hordes, it is a peril of invading brains, invading industry, and invading competition. Victory for Japan would be a grievous blow to our industrial development in Canada and Australia. There was more than met the ear in Prince Pu Lun's parting remark: "I draw no distinction between Chinese and foreigners; a gentleman of intellect is at all times a pleasure to meet." China has long since departed from her arrogant assumption of intellectual and social superiority, but it is not until now that the foreigner's claim to civilisation has been accepted in the Forbidden City. Once China steps down from her affectation of super-eminence into the paths of equal competition, the Western world will have grim cause to dread the Yellow Peril.

The other object of interest in Shanghai was the Russian gunboat *Mandjour*, lying in the

river off the Customs quay. She had sought shelter from her enemy in a neutral port, and Japanese gunboats waited off the entrance, like terriers, longing for her to bolt. They even threatened to come up and drive her out by force. For weeks the people of Shanghai lived with the possibility of a naval fight at their very doors. International pressure, however, restrained the dogs of war. On board the *Mandjour* I met Captain Crown, an old Etonian, her commander. He was practically a prisoner in his own cabin. Two Japanese spies dangled their legs, day and night, over the river-wall, watching his slightest movement. When my friend, Baron von Hoven, visited the captain of the *Mandjour* upon a secret mission, he was able to utilise the services of one of these faithful spies as porter for the bag which contained his confidential papers!

Captain Crown was a delightfully sympathetic character, with scores of friends all over the East and among all nationalities. Later, when his gunboat had been dismantled, he made a journey into Japan in the guise of an Englishman, was arrested and interrogated, but successfully evaded serious consequences. I saw him

momentarily afterwards in Newchwang, in the house of the Civil Administrator, bright and invigorating as a sea-breeze. He left the same night for Port Arthur. Next day he was blown up on the *Petropavlosk*. Had there been more Crowns in the Russian navy, affairs had been less one-sided at sea in the Far East.

Newchwang was ice-bound when I arrived there on March 23. A blinding snow-storm veiled the town in darkness. The river was at the point of breaking up, passage over it was impossible by sledge or sampan. Next morning I made the crossing in the first boat launched that season. I landed at the west end of a town longer than Kirkcaldy. The thaw had come and with it the mud. One sank knee-deep in mire; Chinese were spooning slush out of private sloughs deep as a man's shoulder. From my landing-place eastward to the European section of the town there was no conveyance, no English-speaking inhabitant. I plunged onward, out of swamp into quagmire, out of morass into marsh. I arrived, sodden and dispirited, in the square before the foreign consulates.

Sign of war there was none. A handful of bedraggled Cossack soldiers were bargaining

THE GRAVE OF THE FOUNDER OF THE MANCHU DYNASTY.

Mr. Louis Etzel.

MR. LOUIS ETZEL, WAR CORRESPONDENT, KILLED JUNE 6TH.

for peanuts with the Chinese hucksters. I had read for weeks of the mighty preparations for war in the port of Newchwang, but at my first arrival there they were conspicuous by their utter insignificance. There was nothing to do but indulge in fruitless expeditions after wild geese and widgeon. The echoes of distant happenings rolled indistinctly to us. The rumours of chance refugees disturbed our equilibrium. Facts were rare as pavements in Newchwang.

There came a day when the servants in the Civil Administrator's office were red-eyed with weeping, when officers stalked sullenly along the little stretch of concrete that we called the Bund. Next morning we learned of the destruction of the *Petropavlosk*, the death of Admiral Makharoff, the loss of the brilliant Staff entrusted with the direction of the Russian fleet in Chinese waters. It was a disaster that shook Newchwang to the very core of its muddy heart.

Newchwang, in those days, was the most nervous town I ever have resided in. Alarums and excursions of the garrison were the order of each succeeding day. Two sets of instructions were issued to the Chinese boatmen in the

river, the one to the effect that every junk must tie up off the river-front at nightfall; the other that, at the sound of heavy firing, every junk and sampan must cross to the other bank in order to leave clear the line of fire. It did not occur to any one that those two sets of instructions might clash, until the night when the pilot boats first signalled the depth of water on the bar. As was their custom they did this by means of flashlights. The soldiers of the garrison, expectant of the Japanese, recognised the enemy's torpedo squadron, fired twenty-six shots—and failed to damage a pilot boat. The Chinese junkmasters, however, pursuant to their instructions to clear in the event of fire, hauled in their anchors and started for the other shore. The sentries, pursuant to their instructions to shoot at any moving craft after nightfall, fired a volley, killed three or four unoffending Chinese and wounded others. Such regrettable incidents were significant of the nervous tension of the town.

General Kuropatkin, on his first arrival in Manchuria, lost little time in visiting all the advance positions. He came to Newchwang and there reviewed the garrison. His opinion of its

degree of preparation may be realised from the remark which has since become historical: "At the end of the first month, men will call me inactive; at the end of the second, they will call me incapable; at the end of the third month, they will call me a traitor; at the end of six months—*nous verrons.*"

It was with joy incalculable that on April 15 I received intimation that Viceroy Alexeieff would receive me at headquarters in Mukden. On April 20 I left Newchwang.

CHAPTER V

SIN FOO

SIN FOO is a "mafoo," native groom of a colleague of mine. I call him "groom" out of courtesy to my brother correspondent. As a matter of fact, the relations between master and man are somewhat difficult of definition. Were this published anywhere nearer than ten thousand miles away I should hesitate at the designation. Sin Foo's arms are long, and his revenges disconcerting.

He is small, and lithe, and wiry, with a cunning, wizened face, and the nose of a dwarfened Shylock. His eyes are black and beady, his teeth white and shining, his pigtail gloriously glossy. His favourite attire is a suit of velveteen. In character, and in appearance, he is a very gipsy of a Chinaman.

Engaged as a groom, Sin Foo's other qualities early made themselves apparent. No Cook's

courier ever was so ubiquitous, so perplexingly polyhedral.

We had started from Newchwang in an official launch to make the journey to the Yinkow railway station. At the commencement we blew the head off a cylinder and ceased to exist as a steamer. This was little of a hindrance to our locomotion since the tide raced up-stream at as many knots an hour as the boat had registered upon her official trial. We established a record.

It was somewhat of an embarrassment, however, when we reached our intended destination. Without steam to fight the current, the anchors refused to hold. Sometimes bow on, sometimes stern on, most frequently broadside on, we whirled past the landing-stage, the railway station, the goods-shed, onward into the dusk of a peculiarly uninviting night.

By good fortune an anchor caught a snag and gripped. It held long enough to let us clamber into a lumbering sampan. It was then the usefulness of Sin Foo first revealed itself. The little figure in velveteens was transformed into a most efficient shipmaster. Instinctively he took command of the expedition, sang his

orders in minor Chinese cadences, encouraged the oarsmen, steered the course, brought us safely to shore.

Once landed, our troubles began. We were a couple of miles from the station on a crumbling clay bank. All our belongings were heaped about us. It was already night. The locomotive from the distance shrieked its summons. Sin Foo set off into the dark. He looked like one of the wicked sailors in the woodcut of my boyhood's "Robinson Crusoe." We were very lonely, and somewhat apprehensive. Our first expedition in search of WAR had left us stranded on a sandbank.

Suddenly from the darkness happened Sin Foo. Following him was a string of coolies who, noisily jabbering, shouldered our baggage and tramped into the night. Sin Foo marshalled the column. Stumbling over the hummocks, blundering through the sand-drift, eventually we attained the station.

The train already was an hour behind its starting-time. Every seat was occupied. The patience of the officials was exhausted. Thanks to the tow-boat, the current, and the sand, we had outstayed our welcome.

A Russian station in war-time is like other stations under military control. It is a place where the stuttering foreigner is a supremely obnoxious obstacle to the proper conduct of business. We felt the delicacy of our position. The officials showed their irritation. Sin Foo saved the situation. He cajoled the train men, terrorised the coolies, organised his fellows into effective servants. The baggage melted into the crowded cars, and was absorbed.

On the journey Sin Foo developed unsuspected capacity as an interpreter in Russian; as a conversationalist in French and German and Italian; as a commissariat officer and a body-servant. We confidently anticipated his utter failure as a groom.

Dawn of the third day found us at Mukden, in a siding a man's height from the ground, with our horses to detrain. Our engineering talent grappled with the problem and despaired. Once more Sin Foo was equal to the occasion. He directed a corps of coolies to build a landing-stage with battens brought from heaven knows where, induced the linesman to shunt the waggons one by one to the platform, led the ponies placidly out and forth. We forgave the

elation of his master, knowing the depression that would follow once this Admirable Crichton of the Orient was allocated to his proper duties in the stable.

Somehow it was Sin Foo who found us our lodging, who hired our extra servants, who bought us our horses. Each of us in turn sneaked to him to beg a favour. With time we discovered his master's horses were the fattest, the best groomed, the most cheaply fed. Our jealousy almost led to open rupture, but even Cassandra, in all her dejection, could not have been more consistent in her prophecy of evil than we.

Later, his master and I received permission to proceed to General Kuropatkin at headquarters. The distance was only forty miles, and we were eager to save baggage. We took no food, bundled ourselves, our horses, and our mafoos—personally directed by Sin Foo—into an empty coal-truck. Two nights and a day we spent in that grim and grimy residence. But for Sin Foo we should have starved. Somehow, out of the void and hungry prairie, he materialised eggs, and chickens, and native pears, Chinese cakes and Russian *khleb*. Out of the soldiers

THE AUTHOR.

THE LOOK-OUT AT LAN-JAN-SAN.

he wheedled warm tea and sugar. We lived like fighting cocks, and even the coom of the coal-waggon rubbed off with time.

In the weeks that have passed, Sin Foo has been house-agent and horse-dealer, minister plenipotentiary and major-domo, veterinary surgeon and comedian. We know he "squeezes" as only the Chinaman can squeeze. We know he has a commission off every deal he undertakes. We know he has cornered the market in food-stuffs. We know he has driven out every Free Trader we momentarily have encountered. We know he has organised the servants into a trade union as implacable as any industrial combination of Manchester or Pittsburg. We also know we are powerless in his grasp, and we know that Sin Foo knows.

The identity of Sin Foo we have not been able to fathom. His friends are numberless as the grains of sand upon the seashore. English missionary and Mukden hanging judge, Russian officer and German attaché, humble coolie and haughty mandarin—each and all he hails "my fleund." The marvel is they never fail to acknowledge the friendship. Sin Foo is the pivot of our Manchurian existence.

Sin Foo has his weaknesses as distinctive as his strength. He loves dress as an East End Cockney lass loves ostrich feathers. The day of our official reception by the Tartar General he wore the robes of a mandarin—the loan of a "fleund"—a proceeding which, in the city where decapitations occur thrice daily, would have cancelled his policy in the most lenient of life insurance offices. He borrowed ten dollars from his master to send to a mythical wife in Tientsin, and therewith bought a silver watch with a cracked dial, and innocent of mainspring, which is the envy of his *confrères*. He wears his master's gaiters in the hours of that confiding correspondent's morning nap. He betrayed a liking for my buckskin boots that with difficulty I crushed. Our servants steal from us to pay their debts to Sin Foo, and my stock of handkerchiefs is reduced to the one I carry and the other in the wash. War has her profits no less assured than peace, and Sin Foo is not here to waste time.

I have not yet formed a definite judgment with respect to Sin Foo. I presume I never shall. Honest boy or thief, loyal slave or covert foe, I never yet have been able to see the truth

between the tight-drawn lids of his imperturbable eyes. I engaged him on a mission of assassination. There was a cockerel, an impudent, red-winged, sharp-spurred Mongolian cockerel that disturbed my rest when the sun first rose above the horizon. His doom was fixed, and I awaited Sin Foo's method of fixation. He cooked that cockerel himself, provided a savoury mess of vegetables and Chinese vermicelli, chopped chicken and candied sweet potatoes that relieved the sorrow in the heart of the Dai Lama mourning the disappearance of his pet. I still wonder how successful Sin Foo might have been had the sentence been passed upon myself instead of upon the red Manchurian rooster.

CHAPTER VI

MUKDEN

CHINA is a curious country in which the houses of the living are built to meet the dimensions of the mansions of the dead. All wood in China is cut into coffin-lengths, with the consequence that Chinese roof-poles, doors, and windows all bear a fixed proportion to the accustomed length of a coffin.

What is true of the individual houses is true of the village and the town. The one sacred spot is the grave-yard, and the convenience of the living is wholly sacrificed to the sanctity of the dead.

Mukden owes its importance to its being the guardian city over the tombs of the founders of the Manchu dynasty. Originally a stone-walled city of about a mile across, standing four-square to the compass, it has stretched outward on all four sides to a mud-wall

some mile-and-a-half beyond the ancient city gates. Gradually there is growing up around and outside of that mud-wall a third suburb of houses. This outermost fringe points principally towards the railway station and the houses of the Administration—the Forbidden City of the Russians. From the Western Gate to the railway station is a distance of some three thousand yards. Here, in little stone-built houses, are installed the officers of Viceroy Alexeieff's General Staff. The houses are small, and ugly, and comfortless, cold in winter, stiflingly hot in summer. Viceroy Alexeieff himself lives in a railway-car on a siding, the counterpart of the residence of General Kuropatkin at Liao Yang. His Excellency maintains an almost regal state here in Mukden. I have watched him pacing for long periods round the little grass-plot that makes his exercise-ground. In step with him, but always a yard behind, walks his Chief of Staff, his A.D.C., or the Head of the Diplomatic Bureau. Keen Oriental eyes are watching the Viceroy as I am watching him, and in that yard of separation is comprised an object-lesson of assured rank and absolute authority.

When first I arrived in Mukden the Viceroy was absent with his Staff in Port Arthur. In his place was a man I grew to respect and love, Colonel Pesteech, the officer entrusted with the direction of the censorship over correspondents. At my arrival only three Russian correspondents had been recognised by the viceregal authorities. I was the first foreign correspondent, and the fourth of any nationality, to receive formal recognition. On April 24 I received the first of the red silk brassards ever issued, the symbols of our calling, the marks which soon were to be seen on every Manchurian battlefield.

To receive the recognition of the Russian Government was no simple matter in these early days of the War. One must be personally known to the Foreign Office at St Petersburg, or personally introduced by one's country's ambassador to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. One must carry proper passports. One must have formal letters from the proprietors of his newspaper properly accrediting him representative. One must have a photograph certified by a British Consul, and one must sign a series of regulations defining his privileges at the Front. We were placed upon our honour

Генерал-квартирмейстер
полевого штаба
НАМѢСТНИКА
ЕГО ИМПЕРАТОРСКАГО ВЕЛИЧЕСТВА
на
ДАЛЬНЕМЪ ВОСТОКѢ.

18 Іюля 1904 г.
№ 1216.
г. Мукденъ.

Милостивый Государь,
Господинъ Стори.

Въ отвѣтъ на письмо Ваше отъ 17 (30) сего Іюля, имѣю честь увѣдомить, что Вы дѣйствительно были первымъ изъ иностранныхъ корреспондентовъ, который получилъ право при соединеніи съ русской Маньчжурской арміи, что въ арміи и въ войскахъ Вы были командированы ранѣе другихъ представителей иностранной прессы, и что при войскахъ по настоящее время, по сравненію съ остальными иностранными корреспондентами Вы находились наибольшее число дней.

Прошу Васъ принять увѣреніе въ моемъ почтеніи и преданности.

Полковникъ Пестичъ

Подпись Полковника Пестича свидѣтельствуется канцеляріей Полевого Штаба Намѣстника съ приложеніемъ казенной печати.

За Правителя Канцеляріи Подпоручикъ Харлановъ

THE QUARTER-MASTER GENERAL'S OFFICE,
THE GENERAL STAFF OF THE VICEROY,
MUKDEN.

MR STORY,—In answer to your letter of July 17/30 I have the honour to inform you that you were absolutely the first of all the correspondents to be permitted to join the Russian Manchurian Army. To the forces in the field you were sent earlier than the other representatives of the foreign press, and, in comparison with the other foreign correspondents, you have been longer with the army.—Please receive the assurance of my best respects,

COLONEL PESTEECH,
Colonel of the General Staff of H.E. Viceroy.

The signature of Colonel Pesteech is duly endorsed by the Field Staff of the Viceroy with the official stamp—

Chief of the Chancellery,
LIEUTENANT HARLANOFF.

not to endeavour to avoid these regulations, one of which explicitly stated that no correspondent must be guilty of "want of tact or modesty while accompanying the troops of His Imperial Majesty the Czar." The wide significance of this last rule became apparent as time went on.

To those of us who had had experience in other wars there was nothing in the regulations, formidable though they appeared, to create dismay. They were comprehensive, but they were not prohibitive; in effect they differed but little from those laid down by our own War Office for the regulation of correspondents at the Front.

There is a crisis in the affairs of correspondents which must lead to change. The War had waged for full quarter of a year before one correspondent, save by accident, heard a shot fired or was present at an engagement. The belligerents were at one in their determination to hold spectators at a distance. The Japanese sought to palliate their treatment with dinners, galas, and official functions. The Russians were content to signify that correspondents must await their pleasure. Both issued stringent regulations. Both placed correspondents upon

A REGIMENTAL STAFF.

HOI YAN.

their honour. Both established rigorous Press censorships.

In all of this the fighting Powers were justified of their precaution. Telegraph lines, and the Spanish-American War, destroyed the aforetime liberty of the war correspondent. He became a menace to contending nations. Lord Kitchener, Marshal Yamagata, General Kuropatkin, each in turn signified his dread of the irresponsible agent of the Press. Those of us who have had experience of war appreciate the antipathy. There is a power for harm in the unthinking and the unscrupulous journalist that may wreck the prospects of an army, that may sacrifice ten thousand lives. These things are apparent to the Generals in command, appraisable by those who contemplate the situation.

The converse, though equally true, is less demonstrable. All correspondents are not thoughtless and unscrupulous. The great correspondents—all of whom belong to a dead generation—were men of caution and unimpeachable honesty. Those who would follow in their footsteps are hindered by the imprudences of their fellows, by the impatience of the newspapers at home. The telegraph wire is the curse

of the correspondent. When the man in the streets of Paris and Berlin, London and New York, needs must read an account of a battle before the wounded have been gathered in or the burial parties ordered out upon the battle-ground in Africa or Farthest China, judgment and caution are strained to the breaking-point. The telegraph wire can bear but the shortest of messages, the merest skeleton of description. The correspondent should be more than this. He should be the local historian of the situation, should supply those details of affairs which compensate the home-keeping enthusiast for the dust and discomfort of battle.

Those of us who have consecrated ourselves to the faithful picturing of war regret the incursion of the cable correspondent—that uneasy scavenger of news, the fretful vagrant gathering his items of intelligence as a gleaner gathers straws wherever the winds of chance have blown them. Those of us who take our functions seriously, who realise that war correspondence is as much a profession as that of the soldier or the engineer, resent the intrusion of the callow sensation-mongers vomited from a hundred yellow journals.

There should be a stamp upon the war correspondent of experience and judgment, a cachet that will prove his passport to the theatre of war. Something in this direction has been done by the British War Office, and the most hopeful issue of the present situation has been the refusal on the part of the British authorities to recommend to foreign Governments correspondents who abused their privileges in the past. In time this passive advantage will be replaced by the active good of an actual diploma that will testify to the prudence and experience of the holder as does a degree in Arts to the learning of the graduate. Till then all correspondents must suffer for the sins of the baser among them.

It is to be regretted that a General Staff has no time, and little opportunity, to inquire into the *bona fides* of those applying for permission to accompany troops in time of war. The indiscretions of despatch-boats, the impertinences of juniors, the sensations of unscrupulous news factories, all are credited to correspondents in the mass without distinction and without investigation. The discreet suffer with the indiscreet, and the world is robbed of its just

news because of the impatience of some to provide it with improper information.

In the present War the best correspondents have been the officers of the General Staff entrusted with the forwarding of official despatches. They have beaten all competition from independent journalists. The reason is obvious—the field-telegraph is at the disposition of the Field Staff; the lonely correspondent must ride long marches to headquarters before he can file a despatch. The Russian Censorate has been uniformly kind and considerate, but news which it took a correspondent three days or four days to carry to the bureau, had been published in London and New York before the journalist had ridden off the field.

Another element of difficulty is the fact that the official despatches which enable home-keeping commentators to follow the progress of the war are only known to correspondents in the field after they have been released by, and re-cabled from, the War Office in the capital. Those who are most in the battle see least of the war, and oft-times the correspondent in Manchuria knew less of the happenings about him than did the clerk in Clapham Common.

The army devoid of correspondents, on the other hand, is robbed of its due meed of sympathy from the outside world. All its doings are chronicled from the camp of the enemy. All its heroisms are hidden from the public view. All its individuality is lost in the laconicism of official despatches. Correspondents are as much a necessity to a properly equipped army in the field as the Red Cross. They are a distinct department of modern warfare. Their use was demonstrated in the Franco-Prussian War, in the Russo-Turkish War, in the Egyptian campaigns. Their value has not permanently been destroyed by the licence of the Spanish-American War or the mendacities of the Boxer reports. Self-respecting correspondents can render great services to the forces to which they are accredited. It is as natural for a man to acclaim the virtues of the army he accompanies, as to cheer the champions of his village in a cricket match. The opposing force must ever be the "Enemy"—the one with which we are associated, "Ours."

If the world's sympathy count for anything, only the corps of correspondents can avail anything to evoke it. In the present War the activity of the correspondents with the Japanese has done

much to prejudice public opinion, to further the Japanese policy of monopolising the world's approval. When the War has finished, and the day of settlement has dawned, the value of the daily historian will be made apparent in the attitude of the Powers. It will be found that constant emphasis upon one phase of the struggle has crystallised the belief of nations with respect to the Far East as did the libels of the last decade with respect to the prisons in Siberia. The world does not think, it only receives impressions; and those impressions, in the beginning of the War, were cabled by the vindicators of Japan at the rate of a hundred and fifty messages a day. Russia is strong, and confident in her strength; but war is merely the means to an end, and history proves that that end may wondrously be altered by the intervention of the neutral Powers.

Journalists are the true ambassadors of the present day. They are sent forth not to lie for the good of their country, but to tell the truth for the good of all humanity. Nothing in the experience of the Russo-Japanese war has suggested that that high mission permanently has been filched from them.

CHAPTER VII

THE BRAIN IN THE RAILWAY-CAR

NO nation has realised the strategic value of railways so completely as the Russian. Walled-in to north, and south, and west, by ice-floes, mountain frontiers, and Congresses of Berlin, it has expanded eastward with the speed of its trans-Siberian locomotive. What Britain is as a naval Power, Russia is as a railway Power. The Russian "handy man" is the railroad engineer, not the sailor-man.

Every gun, every limber, every man of the quarter million in Manchuria has come hither by train. It is not astonishing therefore to find the headquarters of the Manchurian Army in a railway-car.

Liao Yang is a square-built, drab-tinted, Chinese city that has sprawled incontinently over its mud walls into suburbs and subsidiary hamlets. To its south and west is the railway station.

Here were the headquarters of His Excellency General Kuropatkin, Commander-in-Chief of the army in Manchuria, established in a trans-Siberian sleeping-car. About the broad square before his official lodging, in waggons, in huts, in the cottages of the railroad administration, were the officers of his Staff, his aides, the heads of military departments. Four years ago, this was known to the Chinese as the site of a mediæval victory over the invading Koreans. At my arrival it was the scene of the supreme direction of the forces designed to beat back the invaders of Korea. A pistol-shot from the perfectly equipped car of the present-day General was the pagoda that marks the headquarters of the thirteenth-century Commander-in-Chief. History was repeating itself in strange fashion upon the station yard at Liao Yang.

As in all modern warfare, there is an utter absence of the pomp and panoply of battle. Guns there are none; the only flag is an enlarged handkerchief marking headquarters; the number of sentries would not satisfy a German provincial mayor. The scientific factor alone is prominent. The officers are directors of engineers, and commissariat, and transport. The men are

electricians, and telegraphists, and railway administrators. The air is ruled with telephone wires as a usurer's cash-book with money columns. The officers in uniform are but exalted messenger boys carrying despatches from the Brain in the Railway Car to the men in shirt-sleeves at the Telegraph Kantora. Twentieth-century war is reduced at headquarters to the appearance of a stock-broker's office.

General Kuropatkin himself is a soldier of the stamp of Lord Kitchener, proceeding on assured lines; believing that ample preparation is to be preferred to the leading of forlorn hopes; refusing to entrust his army's fate to war correspondents, or foreign attachés, or to political considerations. A man of iron will, he is courteous on occasions of formality, yet sternly schools his affability to his purpose. He has come to Manchuria as a soldier, and will not be cajoled from his conception of his duty by any blandishment whatsoever. As Russia is strong enough to neglect the threats at her prestige, so is her Commander-in-Chief strong enough to withstand the attacks upon his interest and his prudence. General Kuropatkin never loses sight of the end in view, and sacrifices all things to

its attainment. He will compel victory, not gamble for it.

Of the soldier within the man, it requires the close of the campaign to expose the significant part. As he remarked at his first coming to Manchuria: "Ce n'est pas le moment d'acheter des maisons à Liao Yang, à Mukden non plus, à Harbin—oui!" His operations are conservative and long-sighted. His personal supervision penetrates to matters of detail, to coals and horses, to the mending of the roads and the disposition of correspondents, to the schooling of Chinese officials and the direction of Courts Martial.

General Kuropatkin is a soldier who knows the intricacies of his service from the private's pipeclay to the marshal's baton. Bluff and impulsive of manner, he is a strategist of infinite patience and precision. Like Napoleon and Moltke, Grant and Kitchener, he believes in the force of numbers. In the sum of his batteries and battalions lies the secret of his strength. Outpost affairs and advanced guard engagements, however dramatic, cannot affect the ultimate disposition of his plans. The Japanese are fighting on a plan of campaign laboriously constructed in ten years of fevered preparation.

The Russians are fighting on a principle of warfare forecertain of ultimate success. General Kuropatkin knows his strength, and will sacrifice none of it to the spectacular excursiveness at first imposed upon his enemy.

The Japanese are fighting for the world's sympathy and the world's approbation. Russia is fighting for victory and for herself. That her soldiers are faithful and her Generals confident suffices her. She can spare Japan the empty triumph of her theatrical assaults. "La gloire" appears neither in the Russian soldier's vocabulary nor in the General's conversation. The ultimate object is the thing; and that object is the open air, the open sea, the emancipation of the peasant. For those things all Russians are fighting, and in General Kuropatkin is personified the national purpose.

Here, in Liao Yang, the Commander-in-Chief is no writing-desk soldier. Personally he reviews his troops, welcomes the incoming regiments, speeds the battalions parting for the front. From Port Arthur to Mukden, from Yinkow to Feng-hoang-cheng, he has himself inspected the district commands, investigated the positions, familiarised himself with the circumstances of each situation.

In the Russian army, as in the Russian household, there is a familiarity of intercourse, a directness of approval, that strikes curiously upon the mind of the British observer. Each company is a family, each regiment a clan, the army a like-minded society. There is here no caste-compelling etiquette. The captain of a company, the colonel of a battalion, the commander of an army, each in turn is but the father of the common soldier, loved as such, called most formally by his pre-name, distinguished as the son of his father. To the Commander-in-Chief the rank and file are his children, controlled and disciplined as such. The result is an army of a remarkable homogeneity.

Ivan Ivanovitch may not know that he is fighting the Japanese. He may be ignorant of politics, and superbly indifferent to affairs in the Far East, but he knows and adores his company commander, respects his regimental colonel, and reverences the General-in-Chief. General Kuropatkin exacts every expression of this personal devotion, is tireless in cementing the interests of his forces, in fostering brotherly love among his children. Much has been made of the patriotism of the Japanese. The commentators have for-

gotten the *camaraderie* of the Russians. Family affection will carry farther than political ambition, and last longer. To its nurture is General Kuropatkin devoting himself in the intervals of his direction of affairs at headquarters.

As the full, red sun dips deeply into the dun Manchurian plain, the sound of unseen soldiers chanting their folk-songs comes distantly upon the ear. Empty as is the square before headquarters of men in uniform, troops are here in their thousands guarding the General and the position at Liao Yang. It is this latent strength of Russia which most impresses the stranger in Manchuria. If there be no sparkle of a fierce enthusiasm, there is the assurance of a settled purpose. Deep-trenched as the granite foundations of the administration buildings about headquarters is the faith of the Russian in the outcome of the war.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HERO POPE

A STRANGE fate pursued me in my early endeavours to reach the Front. When first I was about to start, the *Petropavlosk* disaster, the loss of the Admiral commanding the fleet, completely upset all the Viceroy's plans, made it impossible for him to carry out his intentions with respect to correspondents. When at last I had arrived at Mukden, His Excellency was absent at Port Arthur, conducting operations there. Now that I had come to Liao Yang, properly accredited and satisfactorily introduced, news from the Yalu came to interrupt my progress. I gazed across to the great barrier of hills that cut me off from the operations in the East. Something was happening over there, but what I could not tell. Such news as dribbled through was but news of Rennenkampf's raids. He and his Cossacks were busy on the banks of

the Yalu, but all details were lost in the mist of Chinese interpretation. The Russians were absolutely silent. Correspondents belonged to a species of which they had had no previous cognisance, and the first to arrive among them were regarded with distrust and apprehension. I lay in a Chinese inn and lived as best I could upon hard-boiled eggs and tea, waiting the reply of the authorities to my request for permission to proceed at once to the Front.

Liao Yang was a curious place in those days, a scene of bustle and busy preparation. Men were hard at work making roads, cutting breaches in the walls, throwing up fortifications, digging deep trenches. The streets rattled with transport trains. A bank was hurriedly being organised in a pawnbroker's establishment near the Eastern Gate. Greeks and Jews were fitting up provision stores wherever they could induce the Chinese to grant them premises. Hotel there was none; provisions were few and prohibitively expensive. There was not a tin of milk or an ounce of butter in the town. White bread cost a ransom, and meat of any sort was practically unobtainable. The Chinese had not yet learned to take advantage of the profitable fishing they after-

wards enjoyed in the troubled waters of the conflict.

The only place in which one could gain a meal in Liao Yang was the railway station buffet. There one met general officers and Red Cross doctors, Sisters of Mercy and women of the town, tanned frontier-guards and pale levies from Petersburg. From a train on a siding came the first of the military attachés to be received by General Kuropatkin; their ignorance of events was as dense as mine, their uncertainty as to the future quite as absolute. They had been pitchforked into Liao Yang before the Commander-in-Chief had had opportunity to prepare for their reception. The railway station was a curious meeting-place of incongruities—"à la gare comme à la gare," remarked a cynical Frenchman hungering for war.

On Saturday, April 30, I was busily engaged washing my shirts and undergarments in a great Chinese pipkin when the Chief of the Intelligence Department was ushered into my fangza. Speaking English as a native, he explained that the General was not then in a position to receive correspondents, that much to his regret it would be necessary for me to return to Mukden, there

REMOVING THE WOUNDED.

Count Apraksin and Sisters of Charity.

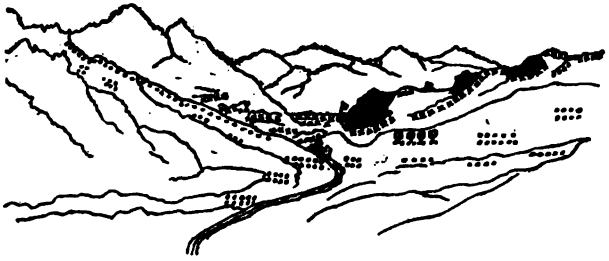
THE HOSPITAL AT LAN-JAN-SAN.

to await His Excellency's pleasure. That day a bunch of foreign correspondents, French, and German, and Austrian, with one Britisher—my old friend and comrade, Charlie Hands—had arrived from Harbin lacking the official recognition which was imperative. Hands, characteristically sanguine, had presented himself at the office of the Chief of Staff, had explained that he came from St Petersburg with letters from the Minister of War, was prepared at once to enter upon his duties, and would be extremely obliged if His Excellency would indicate the division to which he would be attached. The wondering official heard him patiently to a conclusion, bowed politely, and uttered but two words: "Mukden pahzhahlooist!" And so it was for all of us, the accredited and the unaccredited, —"Mukden, if you please!" The three o'clock train unwillingly dragged us northward.

Next day was a beautiful first of May, and General Kuropatkin came to Mukden to consult with the Viceroy's Staff upon matters of importance. It was some days later till we learned those matters were the crossing of the Yalu by the Japanese, the serious situation at Chiu-lien-cheng, and the failure of General Sassulitch to hold back the Japanese. Those were the events which

cost me my first permission to proceed to the fighting Front.

Next week, a pale and silent figure, with wild, wide-open, child's eyes, lay on a camp-bed in the Red Cross hospital at Mukden. Shot through the lungs, wounded in two other places, the priest of the 11th Siberian Rifles had been brought to hospital. Shudderingly he and his comrades told of the awful struggle on the



The Wa-shonza Valley with the Russian positions on the near hills and those of the Japanese governing them.

left of the Russian position. There General Kashtalinski had been posted with the 11th and 12th East Siberian Rifles to hold back the onslaught of three Japanese divisions. When at last the 11th was permitted to retire it stood in the Wa-shonza Valley completely surrrounded by the enemy. There was but one thing to do and that was to cut a way through.

The pope, long-haired and bearded, in full

canonicals, wearing the high-peaked mitre of his priestly rank, raised the holy cross and marched first down the avenue of death. Behind him came the assistants and the sub-priests, and then the long line of the 11th Siberian Rifles, chanting "Gospodi Pomilui!" — "Lord have mercy!" Never has battle witnessed a stranger procession, rarely a more tragic.

The priest, shot through the lungs, stumbled and fell, but his sub-priest raised him, and, totteringly now, with the cross of Christ all blood-bespattered, the strange vanguard staggered out to safety. When at last the ragged remnants of the regiment extricated themselves from their awful situation, the little Japanese soldiers on the heights raised a "Banzai!" of honest admiration.

Of the full-blooded regiment which had taken up position in the morning, General Kashtalinski had been wounded, and twenty-six other officers and nine hundred men were among the dead or wounded.

It is little wonder that the high-strung priest who had led the battle-weary soldiers out of the Wa-shonza Valley suffered a nervous shock which threatened his reason. His body wounds got quickly well, but hysteria unnerved the man, and the hero-pope of the 11th Siberian Rifles returned to Russia a nervous wreck.

CHAPTER IX

THE RUSSIAN AS OFFICER

THERE is no stamp upon the Russian officer as there is upon his brother of Britain and of Germany. In number he is an army, in type he varies as much as do the many-raced constituents of his nation. In appearance he may be a Mongol or a Finn, a German or a Turk; in manner a courtier or a peasant; in effect a student or a fighting man. In his diversity is at once the strength and the weakness of the Russian as an officer.

As a student, the Russian Staff-officer is a gentleman and a soldier of rare intellectual attainment. He has been allowed to follow his bent, has been stimulated in the study of tongues, has been encouraged to investigate the psychology of the peoples dwelling upon the borders of the Czar's domains.

A born linguist, among the French he is a Frenchman, among the Germans a German, even

among the Chinese a Chinaman. I have met Russian officers who in appearance, in accent, and in manner were as British as myself. My censor, Staff-Captain the Baron von Hoven, spoke and wrote twenty-two languages.

The adaptability of the Russian is amazing, the result of a wide humanity, a ready sympathy. Strangely enough, he draws most naturally to the British and the American. Them he respects. The French, despite all treaties and alliances, of all European nations is the least compatible with the Russian character. One officer remarked to me: "The French? Yes, the French love us with exactly the sum of their hatred towards Germany." The Russian is a man of strong passions and wholly unmodern sincerity where his suspicions are not aroused. He loves and hates, sins and repents, has ideals and beliefs.

The Frenchman's volatility offends him, his cynicism repels him, his atheism disgusts him. The Russian is as devout as was ever any commandant of Boers, as scrupulous in the observances of his religion. His nearness to nature is at all times apparent. His faults and his virtues are those of a strong race, of a man whose blood runs warm in the veins.

The Russian officer is no dandy. Broad-shouldered and bearded, he wastes little thought upon the decorative appurtenances of his equipment. The monocled major and the lisping subaltern are unknown in the service of the Czar. Prince of the blood and emancipated peasant wear the same long boots, the same loose tunic, the same charitable overcoat. All are eminently businesslike, with firm, tanned hands accustomed to grapple.

The Russian officer walks with the stride of a man confident in himself, but mercifully lacking in swagger. He carries himself well, with his shoulders flung back and his head held high. His voice is strong and manly. His commands are given in full tones, not jerked out in the series of explosions deemed necessary to discipline in Western armies. Above all is he a horseman and a horsemaster.

The Russian's love of horses is shown in the cattle he has brought with him to the war. There are no gentle palfreys among the chargers in Manchuria. Shaggy-maned and bushy-tailed, the horses of the Kirgiz steppes, the wild horses of the Amur, the swift ponies of Northern Manchuria vie with each other in unruliness.

Siberian or Chinese, the pony stands watchful till his master gathers the reins in his hands, then jibs, scratches with his fore-feet, lashes out with his hind legs, pirouettes gracefully on whatever point for the moment may afford a pivot.

Thank Heaven, the ponies are all small, and to mount is no impracticable athletic feat if one have a quick eye and a ready foot. Once in the saddle, the pony shoots out as an arrow from the bow, is brought up in the fulness of time and by the strength of the rider's wrists, head tossing, tail whisking, eyes rolling mischievously, prepared to accept the circumstances of the uncomfortable moment.

The Russian officer as a rule prefers a larger mount. His charger is drawn from European Russia, if possible is a scion of the Imperial stud. Others come from farther afield—from Hungary, and even England. One officer brought a hunter for which he paid £300 three months before in Ireland. Many of the Cossacks ride dappled greys, making a regiment look like a parade of diminutive Scots Greys.

The favourite colour in the artillery is black, in the cavalry a dark chestnut. Small-headed,

bright-eyed, clean-limbed, and well fed, the Russian charger is a joy to the lover of horse-flesh.

As a soldier, the Russian officer is a strangely nervous fighter, a thoroughbred pawing at the starting-point. His nerves are all a-tingle, his face flushed, his speech quick and voluble. There is none of the studied calm of the British company officer; but there is courage —plenty of it—dogged, as well as hot-blooded. He loves a fight at close-quarters, and it is significant that in war-time the private goes about all his business with his bayonet fixed.

With all his excitability, the Russian officer is commendably reticent with respect to the affairs of the War, and his own part in them. There is no boasting, no despondency, no unprofitable regret. He is content to do his duty as he sees it, leaving the extrication of the forces from their difficulties to those placed in authority over him.

In a British or American camp, whether in the officers' quarters or in the men's lines, criticism is constant and acidulated. No Tommy is so raw, no subaltern is so newly joined, as not to feel and to exercise his right of criticism

and of censure. In Manchuria there is none of this. The responsibility is the General's, the evolution is the men's. With the knowledge each rests content, and, at the worst, the Russian officer's comment amounts to "Nichevo!"—"It does not matter"—the criticism of a campaign summed up in a shrug of the shoulders.

This fatalism is a marvellous force in the possession of a corps of officers. An army of the vast proportions of the Russian army imbued with it is practically invincible. The spirit of "Nichevo" may irritate the Westerner, but it permits an army to rise victorious above reverse, it is a breakwater against the utmost efforts of a numerically inferior force. When the smaller foe fails to influence the *morale* of its opponent it has lost its one effective weapon of attack. So far, the Japanese have affected the sentiment of the Russian officer as little as did last night's shower the granite boulder before my door. Differently from the Britisher, but quite as effectively, the Russian manages to "muddle through" the tightest of situations. He knows his strength, and not all the violence of his enemy can convince him of the contrary. The War is very young yet, and the results are

very far distant. Of their nature no Russian officer has the slightest doubt. He came to win, and he means to win, but he does not say so. "Nichevo!" Why should one waste breath in remarking the self-evident?

Personally, the Russian officer is a charming comrade, a joyous travelling companion. He is not so overburdened with the weight of his commission that he refuses to attend to other matters. His interest traverses the entire scheme of things. By turns he is scientist, sentimentalist, publicist, politician, poet, sportsman, man-about-town, anything and everything but soldier. The affairs of his profession he retains inviolate. Even among themselves the officers converse on any subject rather than upon the War. Their talk is of home, of friends, of the theatres, of last season's latest scandal — the War is taboo.

That intense absorption in the affair of the moment, which is the prevailing quality of the Japanese, is wholly lacking in the Russians. Their humanity rises triumphant above their vocation, and one likes them for their breadth of view. They admire in the Japanese their capacity for concentration, but are not dismayed

by it. "Nichevo!" Russia is big enough to be generous.

One's general impression is that the officers are a set of great-bodied, big-hearted, good-natured schoolboys, sadly pestered by the stone-throwing of the small boys from a neighbouring, inferior, but rival, academy. I have not heard, in all these weeks of trial, one ungenerous word of their enemy from a Russian. The bad taste of the Japanese journals has been conspicuously absent from the press of Russia, as from the conversation of Russians. The big boys regard it as merely the evidence of lack of breeding in the little boys of the other school and shrug their shouldiers. "Nichevo!" They do not know.

There is something that is very captivating about the manners of the well-bred Russian officer and his easy *camaraderie*. One is sitting in a restaurant when there enters a stranger. He strides straight over to the senior officer present, of whatever rank, salutes, clicks his heels together, bows, and shakes hands, announcing his name the while — "Alexandrovitch!" And so, all round the table—salute, bow, click, shake hands—"Alexandrovitch!" In a minute,

duly accredited, properly-introduced, Alexandrovitch is one of the party, and the conversation is general.

He is an excellent good fellow, my friend the Russian officer—when a man of family—careless, generous, intensely sympathetic. But in Russia the army is the one profession for the man of ambition as well as for the man of birth, and the corps of officers is an army as large as the entire regular force of the United States. In its ranks are men of every grade of society, of every degree of intelligence, of every type of temperament. "Nichevo!" So far it has been my good fortune to meet only the better class of officer and of man. In him I have found a man we British have lost much by cultivating so little.

CHAPTER X

THE LAMAS

THE religion of the Lamas crept slowly across Tibet, over the wide, grassy plains of Mongolia, penetrated into Manchuria, and reached even to Peking. So it happened that, at the very moment the British soldiers were knocking at the gates of Lhasa, I was living in a Buddhist temple in Mukden as the guest of the Dai Lama. I have heard much of the atrocities, the obscenities of Lama worship. There may be such accompaniments in the mysterious monasteries of Tibet, but the Mongolian Lamas, as I saw them and knew them, were gentle, simple, kindly souls, living a life whose purity would shame many a Christian brotherhood. Early in the morning, at the first cock-crow, the younger Lamas rose to their devotions, and then, for hours, the courts of the temple echoed with the babbling of prayers. The Lama novitiate is no slovenly course of instruction; it

is a matter of ten years' study, during which the candidates for priesthood learn the prayers, the Tibetan theology, the literature of Tibet and Mongolia, Tibetan medicine, astronomy, astrology, and Buddhist philosophy.

There was something to me very beautiful in the broad, brick courtyards of the temple, shaded with trees, embellished with flowering shrubs in pots, peopled with slow-stepping Lamas gorgeous in silks of canary, and claret, and crimson. Speaking Mongolian, men of an alien race and an alien religion, the Lamas were strangers in a strange land as I was. In that may have lain our bond of sympathy.

In the evening hour, when the rooks and the magpies were winging heavily homeward to the nests in the elm trees about the monastery, the old Dai Lama would link his arm in mine and lead me out to view the treasures of his demesne. Little of conversation there was between us, but out of that sympathy which makes the whole world kin grew something of intelligible communication which availed us much. From the old Dai Lama I learned his fears of the War, his dread of the Russians, his admiration of the little Japanese.

There came times when the Dai Lama would lead me by the hand into the dark recesses of the temple, would show me the altars and the vessels, the gongs and the conch-shells, the joss-sticks and the sacred scrolls, the images of the disciples, and the skull of the holy Lama out of which the priests quaffed their libations. It was then he would show me the screens that pourtrayed the tortures awaiting those who lived a life of impropriety in this world, would indicate with delight that the principal punishments were reserved for women who had two husbands, for women who chattered too much, and for women who beat their husbands—for those were prescribed a series of tortures that did credit to the imagination of the artists, and bore testimony to the experience of the Chinese.

In one a woman was being sawn in two with a jagged cross-cut saw. In another a group of unhappy mortals was strung along a metal funnel which a fire was heating red-hot from beneath. There were razor beds, and racking frames, and thumb-screws, quaint suggestions for the disembowelling of patients, and novel directions for the leisurely squeezing of life out of recalcitrant sinners. I shuddered. The Dai Lama smiled benignly.

The early weeks of May were busy times in the Lama monastery. There was to be the great ceremony of the fifteenth day of the moon and the display of animal dances. People came hundreds of *li* from the prairies of Mongolia. The air resounded with the squealing of bagpipes, the booming of gongs, the hooting of horns, the shrilling of conch-shells, and the deep pealing of the great bell in the abbey. At the gloaming, when we arrived dusty and travel-stained, the younger monks were practising the steps of their mystery dances. Strangely familiar they were. One recognised the steps of the old-time morris dances, the mazurka, and the jigs of Ireland and Yorkshire.

The great day came, when the Dai Lama, magnificent in silken robes two hundred and fifty years old emblazoned with precious stones, and wearing the hat of his mandarinate, presided over the devotions of his fellows. Here again the ritual was strangely familiar. The shaven heads of the monks, the vestments, the altars, and the chanting of the choristers might, but for the surroundings of pagoda roofs and pig-tailed worshippers, have belonged to some old-time priory of Italy or Spain. The music was

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sad and plaintive, a *miserere* chanted in deepest bass by the singers of the abbey. To me it sounded as the music I had heard in St John Lateran's in Rome on Good Friday afternoon, twelve months before.

Suddenly a Cossack soldier strode clankingly up the courtyard. His rifle was slung athwart his shoulders, his thong whip dangled from his hand, his great boots were all dust-besprinkled. Arrived in front of the sacred image of Buddha, he threw himself on the pavement, kow-towed three times, rose, and made his way to the Lama Bishop whose benediction he received. His devotions done, the Buriat became a soldier again, clattered heavily back to the service of the Czar. Verily, manifold and various are the children of the Little Father!

CHAPTER XI

MY GARDEN OF PEACE

WAR acquaints one with strange bed-fellows, and still stranger resting-places. I am writing now, in this gentle May month, from a scene of such idyllic peace as the world rarely gives. It is a garden spot, God's-acre in the wilderness. It is a garden of rare shrubs and blossoming fruit trees, of familiar flowers and gentle turf slopes, of cool and shaded courtyards. It is the tomb of the founder of the Manchu dynasty, the graveyard of a dead Emperor of China.

Set far apart from the stress and turmoil of the city, it is an oasis upon the dusty plain of Manchuria, a place of peace in time of battle. The keepers of the sepulchre are old men and silent, treading noiselessly in soft-soled, felten slippers. The calm of perfect peace is over everything. The repose of the great dead is all unruffled save for the crooning of the doves

in the eaves of the temples. War, for the moment, is forgotten; and I, the recorder of war, most gratefully am at rest.

There is a friendly familiarity about the violets and the daisies, the blossoms of the apple and the pear trees, that strikes kindly to the heart of the stranger among the thousand fantasies of the Orient. By the necromantic perfume of pine trees one is carried ten thousand miles to the westward, is gently laid in some abbey-yard of England. This is no longer east of Suez, this coppice of alders and hazels, this bank of hawthorn and lilac, this forest of firs and oak trees. It is too kind, too natural, too homelike. From the turf peep hyacinths and forget-me-nots, frail columbine and nodding bluebells. The trees are garlanded with blossom. From the mistletoed limb of an elm-tree the cuckoo is calling to the spring—Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Heavily, a heron flaps overhead to the mere beyond the willows. A pheasant trips it daintily across the light-enribboned sward into the denser greenness. And this is Manchuria, and the time is war-time!

As I rode forward, pushing the sprays of syringa and white-pipe aside, strange monolithic dogs and griffins gaped from the undergrowth,

carved obelisks stood sentinelwise in the clearings, rarely chiselled balustrades flanked the avenue. Out from under a giant cedar I burst upon the delicate arabesque of the southern gateway. My pony's hoofs clanked upon the paving. A hawk poised hungry overhead in the turquoise Manchurian daytime. I reined in my mount and contemplated the entrance to the tomb of the first great Manchu monarch. It surpassed one's conception of the art of the Chinese, was superior to the tombs of the Mings in Peking, found its only parallel in the monuments of the Moors.

Round the trim wall of terra-cotta tiles I rode to a side gate, dismounted under its shadowing eaves, walked silent and uncovered between great walls of pines along the alley that intersects the main approach, found myself in the broad avenue guarded by stone statues of camels, and horses, and elephants that sweeps from the southern gate to the house in which the memorial tablets, borne on tortoise-back, set forth the styles and dignities of the dead beyond. A great grey wall shuts off the succeeding courtyard.

The ancient keepers of the place paced about in silence, granted me entrance to the sacred precincts. A bonza undid the heavy silver lock,

passed me on to the great square. Here were the temples and the mourning-houses. At each corner of the wall was a look-out tower, roofed with the glistening tiles from the Imperial potteries, embellished with red, and green, and silver tracery. The wide-flung square was grass-grown. Leading to the central temple was a gangway chiselled of stone, the sacred Dragon of the Emperor, upon which no man might set foot and live. Beyond this lay the tomb.

In the rear of the temple stood a solid stone-work screen restraining the evil spirits from the resting-place of the Emperor. At its base was the altar with its colossal vessels hewn out of stone. I passed through a vaulted passage to the base of the Imperial tumulus. Before me was the entrance to the tomb, sealed with Imperial tiles. The mystery lay beyond, the traditions of vast treasure, the bones of the man who founded a dynasty in Cathay.

In this strangely democratic land of China all tombs are alike, the coolie's and the Emperor's, mere mounds of earth differing in strictly apportioned height according to the quality of the dead. So it is that all the grandeur of the Imperial tombs at Mukden is expended on the

entrances and the outer courts—the ante-rooms to the death chamber. The tomb itself is but a heap of lime-white earth surmounted by a tree to mark it. On the branching tree were roosting a pair of ravens. Sooner or later they will quit this restful God's-acre for the charnel-house of the battlefield.

A bugle-call from the roadway scares the pigeons from the roof-tree. Neither they nor I may rest too long in this, my Garden of Peace!

CHAPTER XII

DUST TO DUST

MUD and dust are the alternatives of a Manchurian existence. Dirt that engrains itself into one's innermost viscera is the result. It is an honourable dirt, the stamp of a man's activity. It becomes the braided General better than his shoulder-straps. It is the pride of the veteran, the wonder of the recruit, the disgust of the dilettante. To us, who are correspondents, it is a uniform binding us in a brotherly grime. We read men's journeys in the mud-stains on their breeches. We estimate their travail by the sand-dunes on their faces. Their hands are geological records.

The dust is of a finer, more insidious character than the driven grit of Berber or the pulverized quartz of Kimberley. The dust is a tawny yellow here in Manchuria—not ruby red as is that of South Africa—flying light, drifting far,

insinuating itself through every cranny, embedding itself in every pore.

Each day, when the sun has gained a little warmth, the wind rises, the dust begins to fly. By noontime one rides through a burning, prickling sand-fog that veils the sun, masks the landscape, and smears the fresh Manchurian spring-land khaki colour. Till three or four of the afternoon the warm southerly wind continues to strengthen, the sand continues to swirl, one's pony coughs and sneezes, one's throat feels like the chimney to the furnace of Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego, one's temper is inextricably buried in the dust-drift.

It is then one realises the comfort in the bubbling Russian samovar, the life-giving qualities of tea. To each land is its own wine. The wine of sleet-slatted Siberia is as surely vodka, as the wine of happy rural England is ale, or the wine of central France is rich, red Burgundy. The wine of Manchuria is tea. Sugarless, milkless, lacking even the lemon of effete civilisation, it is the only liquid that soothes the fretted throat, the sand-chafed larynx of the luckless traveller. No nectar can compare with the gentle juice of *chahi* when the May winds

are out and the Chinaman's fields are blowing broad-cast into the sullen, yellow waterways he glories by the name of river.

Sometimes one finds the longed refresher in a Chinese hut, served by a smoke-dried native out of quaint, blue-dragoned bowls of porcelain. More often is one indebted to the soldier's samovar by the roadside, drinking deep draughts from white-enamelled mugs dented with the bumping of the route. The other day I sipped my tea beside the Chinese Chief-Justice on the bench at Mukden, the while a recalcitrant robber was bambooed before us for brigandage and blackmail.

Yesterday the dust-storm was particularly noxious. The wind was of hurricane strength, the mud of the past week had dried up and lashed itself across the plain in stinging blasts of hot, incinerated grit. The paper window had blown about my ears while I was writing, encircling me like a circus clown with his hoop. Tea was the only possible salve for my vexed spirit and badly blistered throat, and tea I had none.

I turned my pony's steps out from the hummocks we had been threading for miles on the prairie

into the road that led to Mukden. A wide space before the Great West Gate, vast as a parade-ground, was the sporting-ground of the dust demons. Three days before, when I crossed it, the mud had been up to my pony's withers, derelict transport waggons had marked the route of a baggage-train. Yesterday it was a swirling, sweeping hill of venomous dust particles, the agitated sweepings of a city. The grit drove into my throat and choked it, filled my nostrils, pinged against my skin through tunic and riding-breeches. My sulky pony drooped his head still lower and cowered before the storm. I spurred him on to where a wilted Red Cross flag fluttered feebly from a pole.

The flag stood opposite a door in a high brick wall, guarded by a sentry. A word to the soldier, and the door swung open. Pony and I clattered into a cool and shaded courtyard. Softly the door closed behind us, and we were in a new world, a world of peace and wonderful calm. Soft lights and the stillness of purity replaced the obscene bluster of the dust-storm. Pony raised his head and shook off the recollection of the pandemonium. I gave myself over to the care of a Red Cross nurse who smiled

kindly at my dirt-smeared face. Together we sought the Surgeon-in-Chief of the hospital.

Here, in Mukden, the Red Cross is installed in a temple, a temple of the Mongolian Buddhist Lamas. The temple consists of a series of pavilions built round airy squares opening into one another, an ideal site for an hospital, a place of absolute tranquillity.

Each pavilion has been cleaned, and papered, and ventilated. On the floors are Chinese rush-mats. Down each side is a row of iron bed-steads. High up in the corner is a Russian icon. The dirt and the religion of the Lamas have yielded to the cleanliness and godliness of the Red Cross sisters.

A week ago there were some six score patients in the hospital, men wounded in the fights upon the Yalu. Yesterday there were but four. The others had been removed to Harbin, the next stage nearer home. The hospital was waiting its next train-load of maimed and injured. The tiny operating theatre stood significantly ready.

In the hospital I met a friend, a Russian officer, the censor of my despatches. Together we wandered about the pavilions admiring their

cleanliness, glorying in their white linen, noting the neatly-folded blankets. We entered the ward occupied by the four remaining officers. My companion, after the Russian fashion, introduced himself to each in turn, presented me. One of the patients, a young officer, nephew of the Viceroy, hearing the name, exclaimed, "Are you the Baron von Hoven?" My companion indicated assent. "Then I've a letter for you." Out of his little heap of personal belongings he extricated a letter, an envelope from the Baron's mother, containing money. That letter had been carried all the way across two continents from St Petersburg to the Yalu without reaching him for whom it was intended. There the messenger was severely wounded, shot through the head. Here, in Mukden, in the quaintly fashioned Lama's temple, the mother's message, by grace of a Japanese bullet and a skilful surgeon's knife, was delivered to her son. Postmen follow strangely tortuous paths in war-time.

From the pavilion we strolled to a marquee where, with the principal surgeon, at last I had the tea my throat still craved. In the cool depths of the great tent, to the accompaniment

of the flapping of canvas, the English-speaking surgeon recalled old days in the cold grey city of the North whose university was my Alma Mater and his.

With the sinking of the sun, the wind had fallen and the dust-clouds were at rest. I rode away from the temple. The little clay dogs and purple dragons on the Lama's roof-tree grinned a grotesque good-night. They had seen so many changes in this sacred city of Mukden. The dust and the mud alone stayed constant. "Dust to dust" is more than a requiem in Manchuria. It is a philosophy.

CHAPTER XIII

THE END OF MAY

As the days in May passed one another, and still we rested inactive in Mukden, I volunteered for service on the Red Cross at the Front. I petitioned His Excellency the Viceroy to permit me to be attached to a flying column, leaving to him the distribution of such news as I might obtain from my proximity to the Front. On May 27 I received the Viceroy's permission to report myself to the General in command of the hospital arrangements at Liao Yang.

On May 28 we correspondents who dwelled in the Lama temple gave a dinner to our comrades and to the officers of the Censorate. It was a strange ceremony, in a quaint habitation hung about with trophies and treasures of the monks, decorated with torture-scrolls and rich vestments, banked with white hawthorn from the Imperial tombs. Representatives of ten nationalities sat down at dinner, and the

language of congratulation comprised every known tongue from Tibet to San Francisco. We had men from Mongolia and Manchuria, from Russia and Germany, from Italy and France, from Denmark and Norway, from Britain and the United States. Little Middleton, as President of the mess, occupied the chair, and to him and me Colonel Pesteech confided that he had dreamed we should shortly go forward to the Front as correspondents.

Next morning the dream came true, and Middleton and I were free for the second time to seek Liao Yang and the mysteries beyond.

The town had wholly changed from its appearance at our departure thence a month before. It had become a fortress, defended by all manner of forts and works. Roads had been built, bridges had been laid across gullies, vast stores of provisions had been placed in reserve upon the open ground about the station. Pontoons had been built across the Tai-tse-ho, and out from the eastern extremity of the town had been placed the works devised to meet the oncoming Japanese.

The forts were works constructed on the principle of "far and near defence," positions to

be occupied by field-guns and to be defended at the last resort by forces of infantry. In front of these were barbed-wire entanglements, chevaux-de-frise, and pitfalls. At every strategic point rifle pits had been dug and emplacements for cannon constructed. The pitfalls were circular holes, bristling with stakes, and covered in some cases with brushwood—a strange survival from the days of Bannockburn. It seemed impossible that an enemy ever could thread its way through those defences, should the battle roll up to the gateway of Liao Yang.

General Kuropatkin needed but one thing, and that thing was a sufficiency of troops. In the whole of Manchuria, south of Harbin, he possessed at that time fewer than 150,000 men. Those were distributed, so far as I was able to judge, as follows:—

The army of the East, under Lieutenant-General Count Keller, at Feng-chu-ling	20,000
The army of Liao Yang, comprising all the troops from Kirin to Liao Yang, and including those attached to the Viceroy's headquarters at Mukden, and to General Kuropatkin's headquarters at Liao Yang, under General Sassulitch . . .	46,000
Carry forward	66,000

AMMUNITION INSPECTION BEFORE THE FIGHT.

THE OUTPOST AT MOTIENLING.

Brought forward	66,000
The army at Hai-cheng, in course of arrival, under General Sarubaeff . .	16,000
The first army corps at Tashichao, under General Baron Stakelberg . . .	26,000
The army of Port Arthur, comprising seventeen battalions of infantry, one squadron of cavalry, three batteries of field artillery, half a battery Hotchkiss guns, and the Engineers, under command of General Stoessel	24,000
In addition to those were Rennenkampf's raiding Cossacks at Tsaumatse .	5,000
And Mistchenko's Cossacks at Siu Yen .	1,500
	138,500

Those troops were patently inadequate to hold the long front from Feng-hoang-cheng to Port Arthur. Already the Japanese had cut the railway line north of Port Arthur, had landed their troops on the narrowest neck of land there, had isolated the great port from communication with the General-in-Chief.

A few weeks earlier I had seen in Mukden the sanitary train which ran the gauntlet of the first invaders, had been shown the splashes where the Japanese bullets had knocked the paint off its sides, had been told that two sick soldiers were wounded by the fire of the enemy. I had seen Viceroy Alexeieff steam into his quarters,

saved from the danger which threatened him of utter separation from the provinces under his control. There followed weeks when news of Port Arthur was unobtainable.

The true barrier to the invasion of Manchuria has always been the great range of hills sweeping from the great White Mountain down to and along the Liao Tung Peninsula, not the river frontier of the Yalu. At the time of my arrival in Liao Yang the Russians held all the passes, all the mountain-peaks, and all the land on the hither side of the highlands. The Japanese lay on the other side, waiting their opportunity. They knew they possessed the strategic advantage of the situation. They had a strong army posted on the extreme south of the long Y-shaped battle-front. They had another strong army posted on the extreme east, and between the two they had in the army of Takushan — an army leaning upon its sea base—a force of men which could be used to threaten either Kuropatkin from the east, or to march across the rear of Stakelberg's army and so prevent his retreat from the peninsula in the south.

In the Takushan army was the key to the strategic position. Kuropatkin could move his

supports only along the whole length of the rugged road to Feng-hoang-cheng, or southward along the narrow path to Stakelberg's forces in Liao Tung. The Japanese had good roads—short and not mountainous—whereby to attain either Feng-hoang-cheng or Pitsewu.

And yet the call for the relief of Port Arthur was so clamant that the Commander-in-Chief despatched a fifth of his total force on an errand of mercy. In a man, whose personal policy was concentration and conservation, the dread of this extension of the battle-front may be conjectured.

CHAPTER XIV

THE OLD TA PAGODA

OUT from the south-west angle of Liao Yang there stands a pagoda, a monument to old-time Manchu bravery and virtue. In the dull level of the plain it is as notable as the Pyramid of Cheops in the Libyan Desert. It commands the close-packed Chinese city, the slatternly Russian town, the brightly-varnished railway cars of headquarters, the parade-ground and the regimental camps, the Red Cross nestled in the trees across the millet-fields. Wrapped about its base is a little pleasure-ground, a place of tramped walks and little square tables, of enamelled plates and candles stuck in bottles—the Earl's Court of Liao Yang.

Here, in the evening, what time the sparrows and the martins, the pigeons and the magpies, flutter about the hoary head of the Ta Pagoda, the band of the second Battalion of Sappers

plays Rubenstein and Tschaikowsky, regimental marches and rude Slavonic melodies, sometimes chants a folk-song.

Later, when the turquoise blue of the Manchurian twilight has deepened into night, we mingle here with the officers sojourning at headquarters, learn of their fights and their ambitions, discuss the war and its strategy, drink to the health of absent comrades, and, on occasion, withhold our farewells till three o'clock of the morning.

Our amusement is in each other, in the relaxation from strict discipline, in the make-shift presentment of the *al fresco* restaurants of the great capitals of Europe. We are a good-natured crowd and a self-respecting, happy in the companionship of our friends, and not exacting in our demands for entertainment. It is here we welcome the newcomer, here we speed the parting warrior for the front upon the Yalu or down towards Port Arthur. Here we learn the last grim tidings of the billet found for a Japanese bullet in the breast of the captain with whom we rode at Yinkow, or the sub-colonel who shared his *chainek* with us on the way out from Mukden. Here we rub shoulders

with Generals of Division and sub-lieutenants rosy from the military schools, with women from Odessa and Shanghai, from the Broadway of New York and the outer boulevards of Paris Here we meet old friends of other campaigns, or form acquaintanceships with the men who now are making history in the Far East.

It was here I met Lieutenant Rebasoff, a young *garde de frontière*, twenty-three years of age, clean-cut and strong of limb, already a hero. With a detachment of a dozen of his men he was down at Wafangho, in the middle week of May, upon a scouting expedition. Suddenly the little party of Russians was surrounded and cut off by a squadron of Japanese under a major. The scouts wheeled and broke their way back through the ranks of the enemy. The Japanese major pursued and taunted them with fleeing. He was an officer trained at St Petersburg, and his insults in Russian stung the boy-lieutenant. The Japanese major swung his sabre and slashed at the head of Rebasoff. The Russian crouched along the barrel of his pony, avoided the blow, replied with an upper cut at his adversary so that his sword's edge blunted against the vertebræ of the major's neck. The

Japanese swayed from his saddle and died. "See, they are a stiff-necked people, those Japanese!" chuckled Rebasoff, showing me the dent on his service sword.

But the boy-lieutenant's day's work was not yet accomplished. His quartermaster-sergeant was unhorsed, severely wounded, shot through the chest. Rebasoff caught the charger of the dead Japanese, mounted his *wachtmeister* upon it, rode away for the railway line. From the hilt of his hanger swings a Yapontzi trophy—the sword-knot of the major. Beside it is the Russian red badge of courage—the Order of Stanislaus.

It was here I heard the story of Captain Worolsoff, the sole survivor of Colonel Müller's battery of artillery from the cruel fight of Chiu-lien-cheng. I had seen the Captain in hospital, lying very quiet and very grey, with a leg shattered by fragments of a Japanese shell. He had told me nothing of the deed that had brought this disaster upon him, had merely taken from a purse at his bedside a jagged piece of iron and passed it to me, quietly smiling—sufficient comment from a soldier!

I heard his tale in the shade of the imperturb-

able pagoda, learned how, on that bloody First of May, he had stood by his guns as on parade, holding his men to their posts, demanding from them all the niceties of discipline—head back, chest out, shoulders square, feet properly at attention—till every officer of the battery was dead or wounded, and he at length, too, fell, crippled by a bursting shrapnel.

There are other, more sinister, tales whispered across the tables in the evening light. I have been told by a colonel—an officer of undoubted probity—of his discovery of two dead Cossacks, with their throats slit, their tongues cut out, their breasts rudely carved with representations of the emblems upon their shoulder-straps. Hung Hutze or Japanese? Who can tell? War is very ugly out there in the outposts. The rules of Geneva yield to many exceptions.

Sadly as men comment upon these evidences of barbarity, there is a universal feeling that the Japanese themselves are an enemy full worthy of the respect of Russians. General Kuropatkin, in his General Order commanding good treatment for the wounded, reverence for the dead, calls them "our brave foe." Officers acknowledge their bravery and their chivalry.

It was in this garden, when news of the Japanese message of condolence with the Russians upon the loss of the *Petropavlosk* and its gallant company of sailors reached Liao Yang, that an officer rose and proposed a toast to the enemy. The toast was received and drunk in all sincerity by those kind and simple soldiers of the Czar.

And so the old Ta Pagoda looks down and listens to the gossip of this twentieth-century conflict, its heroisms, and its pathos, as it has listened to similar tales of combat told in many varying tongues these last six hundred years and more. War has ever been a fruitful topic in the cycles of Cathay.

CHAPTER XV

THE ROAD TO THE EAST

THE day came when I could ride out from Liao Yang, bound for the actual Front. At dawn I was up and about, superintending the saddling of ponies, the arrangement of packs. Morning in Liao Yang was always a grateful season. Quaint figures of Chinamen on mule-back, on bullock-back, on pony-back, came riding in with sweet-smelling merchandise from the plains. The freshly-watered streets seemed almost wholesome, until the pad of thousands of felten slippers had wakened the road-bed into choking, noisome dust. The sun was but little above the great chain of mountains to the east when we rode forth and out to the quarters of the *chef d'étape*, where we would secure our escort. In those days there was much fear of Hung Hutze, and non-combatants were not permitted to proceed until they were accompanied by an armed guard.

Our convoy consisted of a long string of carts under the command of a major, protected by a company of soldiers on foot. Our progress was slow and wearisome, through clouds of dust kicked up by our trampling train. To avoid it I rode in front until the distant cry of "Monsieur!" called me to the fact that the road which appealed to me was not the line of march of the convoy, and that, if I desired to attain my destination in company with them, I must e'en console myself with the dust and grit of travel.

Out along the weary miles of street, through the Eastern Gate, past the great stores of Korean timber laid up for the coffins of the generations yet unborn, out into the dusty plain beyond, we rode in company. The Russians were testing mines on the positions outside the city. Little geysers of earth, and stone, and rubble, sprang into the air to right and left of us, suggesting the possibilities of trouble in the ground over which we ourselves were proceeding.

Eight thousand yards from the town we passed into the first line of hills — little green knolls recalling the southern uplands of Scotland. Noon found us at a gaunt and sooty Chinese

inn, twelve miles from town. Believing it the resting-place of my convoy comrades, I ordered my tea and hard-boiled eggs the while my horses got their much-needed water and kiao-lang. After the meal I slept, and when I woke I found my escort once more had changed direction and I was freed from its dust and its company.

I rode forward along the bed of a stream, through miles of donkey transport, until I reached the officer in command in advance. He was a red-faced captain of transport, the living embodiment of Falstaff. To my joy he spoke German, and possessed sufficient of the vices of his Shakespearean prototype to make him companionable. He told me that in his donkey-train were five hundred and thirty asses, that each little creature carried one hundred and sixty pounds of stores, and made from forty to fifty miles a day without difficulty. The stores were sugar, and black bread, and rusks. Each day's march cost him 2,120 roubles. As he was bound on a four days' journey, the total cost of the hire of transport alone was 10,000 roubles, every penny of which, as well as the payment for the stores themselves, went into the capacious

pocket of the Chinese contractor Tephuntai, the richest man in Manchuria.

This Tephuntai interested me. He had stores at Port Arthur, at Liao Yang, at Mukden, and at Harbin, each of which was a mine of gold in those days of war. At each of the centres he had a domestic establishment and a group of wives. In order to take full advantage of the war, he had, in addition, two partners in Japan who did much of the contract work for the enemy. It is the custom for contractors to grow fat in time of battle, but the obesity of a Chinese contractor excels that of any other nationality.

As we rode we came to the first barrier of hills, mounted painfully up the steep ascent, crossed the divide through a narrow gulch at the summit. The view from it was beautiful and memorable. The neat-stepping donkeys, each with its load of one hundred and sixty pounds upon its back, tripped unheedingly up the stony paths. The road wound downward and backward until it was lost in the foot-hills veiling Liao Yang, downward and forward to the village of Siu-lin-tse.

The hills, covered with honest Scots bracken,

rose steeply to right and left of us. In the banks by the road-side were forget-me-nots and great white bells, pink vetches and beautiful sprays of white clematis, red and purple iris and gentle maidenhair. It seemed strange to me that hundreds of soldiers should tramp those roads each day and yet not one blossom should be plucked, not one bush destroyed.

Evening fell as we rode into the position at Siu-lin-tse. To me it seemed strangely familiar. A great stone kopje, destitute of vegetation, commanded the camp. Horses were picketed on the haughs of a sun-dried stream. The village of Chinese mud-huts nestled in the shade of half-a-dozen great elm trees. It could not be Siu-lin-tse in Manchuria, it was Brandfort in the Orange Free State. A cuckoo calling from the hill brought me to the reality of pigtails and Cossack cavalry.

At the *étape* I was offered an escort of Cossacks to ride with me to the next stage on the road to Tsaumatse. My Falstaffian friend counselled a start with him at four o'clock the following morning, and the continuance of my journey to the quarters of General Count Keller. I adopted his plan.

CHAPTER XVI

THROUGH THE YANG-TSE-LING

IN the morning I was up before the sun. I topped the rise in the misty half-light, just as the soldiers were waking. On the long grassy slope before me the artillery horses were feeding, muzzy figures loomed out from the haze here and there, seeking their chargers. It was a weird scene and a memorable one. Covering a wide semi-circle of ground the tents gleamed coldly white and monstrously large against the gloomy blackness of the kopje. Away to the left, above the trees, a Red Cross flag was hanging limp. Nearer, the transport donkeys and the mules were champing at their morning meal.

Quickly the bivouac fires burned their way through the morning fog. In another minute, the great, round, full-blooded Manchurian sun had lifted the languorous laager into life. From

the hoarse throats of the Cossacks came the chanting of a morning hymn—a strange *reveille*, but an impressive, to have carried on the soft arms of the morning. To the Scotsman it raised big-throated memories of Covenanters and the hills about the auld house at home. I stood uncovered, a mute worshipper at the birth of a Russian encampment.

The camp straggled inconsequently over a wide area of inhospitable, dust-driven plain. In it were no ordinary avenues of tents, no provision for sanitation, little evidence of discipline. It lolled listlessly upon the plain, an ugly, dirty, odoriferous aggregation of temporary habitations. As I rode slowly forward, all around me were lanky, frowsy, Siberian peasants, busy with their morning's occupations, slaughtering cattle, boiling tea, cobbling boots, tending the saddle-sores on their horses. Overhead were poised slow-winged hawks, waiting their morning meal of offal—the pomp and panoply of war schooled to the confines of an abbatoir.

Already the tinkling of the bell at the neck of the lead-mule told that the convoy was in movement. I joined Falstaff, and together we rode, far in advance of the transport train, to

COLONEL ARANOVSKY,
CHIEF OF STAFF.

CAPTAIN SKOROPATSKY,
A.D.C.

GENERAL COUNT KELLER.

GENERAL COUNT KELLER'S QUARTERS AT NIU-TEE-I.

reach the next *étape* and breakfast. Already I had learned that the Russians had no rule for meal-hours. We ate when we could, and where we could, and what we could. Breakfast might be strong *borsh* soup, loaded with vegetables and beef; lunch, tea and a rusk; supper, as like as not, hard-boiled eggs and a Chinese cake. The times for those things were the hours of our opportunity.

As we progressed we rode between hedges of sweet-smelling, English red roses. We forded, belly-deep, swift-rushing streams—tricky crossing-places for donkeys. Lanjansan we reached about an Englishman's ordinary breakfast-hour. Our meal, however, was of vodka and preserved mushrooms—the *zakouski*—awful, leathery steak, and mildewed, sour, black bread. High above the roofs of the *étape*, in the branches of a spreading elm-tree, was the look-out ever on the watch for surprise from the plain that rolled east, and south, and north of us.

On our setting out again we first encountered a weary train of ambulance carts, racking and torturing two hundred of the sick and wounded from the camps about Feng-hoang-cheng. A German-speaking doctor introduced me to the

interesting cases, raised the tilt of the Red Cross carts to show me the heavy-eyed, white-faced sufferers within. Two cheery-faced Sisters of Charity jolted in an open cart with the escort of soldiers. The news that was brought us was news of desultory fighting along the road from Feng-hoang-cheng. Heavy fighting there had been none, prospect of a great battle there was not.

The shadows were growing long when that afternoon we rode across the great pass of Yang-tse-ling. Heavily we plodded up the mountain—three miles of pack donkeys passing three miles of transport carts. From the top I gazed down into a heap of great hills, hurled there without order and without plan. It seemed impossible that an invading army ever could force those strongholds of nature. From my feet a new military road wound downward between steep banks to be lost in the defiles of the mountains. A single gun and a posse of determined men might hold that pass, as long as ammunition lasted, against an army of thousands. I realised, what dimly I had understood before, that in those great hills was contained the true barrier to invasion from

Korea. They were such hills as Buller met at Colenso, only grander, and more rugged, and more perplexing in their tortuosity.

Very slowly down the other side, between great banks embellished with white peony roses, yellow and white tiger lilies, sprays of loving white syringa, and huge shrubberies of hydrangeas, I rode to the trickling stream in the valley. The hills were forbidding as those of Glencoe, the land as naturally a stronghold of highlanders. It did not strike me, till afterwards, how foreign to the steppe-bred Siberian peasants were the opportunities of its rugged strength.

The sun had left the valleys when I rode past the lonely pagoda marking the scene of some giant struggle of the old-time, along the rugged road that led to Hoi Yan and our sleeping-place. We were travelling very slowly now, for we had covered forty-five miles in a day of burning heat, and our ponies were feeling the weight of their burdens. Hoi Yan was a welcome and a relief. I was welcomed by Count Kamarofski, the Intendant of the camp, whose cousin had been my fellow-traveller in South Africa. From him I learned that General

Count Keller had there placed his rainy-season quarters, and that to him I must first present my papers and seek his pleasure as to my disposition at the Front.

Night had fallen when I reached the General's tent, all fir-embowered to mask its situation from the Japanese. The General himself was a man of surprising youthfulness, of medium height, distinguished of appearance, and courteous of bearing, with a pair of eyes of remarkable intentness. He looked straight into one and spoke with a softness of accent that suggested the Court rather than the camp. His reply was a polite request that I should remain in his camp until he had opportunity to communicate with headquarters at Liao Yang.

With such consolation I sought food and bed—bed on the cold stones of the outer court-yard of the *étape*. There I slept, lulled by the snoring of Falstaff outstretched beside me.

CHAPTER XVII

SIN FOO'S JUSTIFICATION

SIN FOO improved on acquaintance, with frequent characteristic lapses from grace. In the last days of May, Middleton and I found ourselves destined for the Front, once more the advance guard of the correspondents. This time we were hopelessly disconnected from our grooms, our horses, and all our belongings. As we were whisked out of Mukden station we saw the boys, a disconsolate bunch, about our waggon on a siding. The pledged word of an army of train hands had cut us off from our transport and our commissariat. Our hope lay in Sin Foo. We slept that night at the home of the Rev. Mr Macnaughtan and his wife, the kind-hearted missionaries of Liao Yang. Next morning I was up and about at day-dawn. Sin Foo was there, delightedly saluting, had tracked us to our lair.

"Two-dollah-half —— Peking ca't masta'."

"All right, Sin Foo, have catchee all proper?"

"All plopa', masta'."

And it was so. He had transported our belongings safely from Mukden, had detrained the horses, had warded off the assaults of a troop of marauding Cossacks, had triumphantly landed his charge at the gate of the mission compound.

Like all Chinamen, Sin Foo had a vastly greater respect for the hordes of Hung Hutze than for the troops of the Mikado or the Czar. He sought to stay us from venturing into their haunts. We laughed at him, and promised him escort.

When at last we had set out, Sin Foo lost no time in making friends with the folk most likely to be of use to him, the transport riders and the Chinese compradore in charge of the donkey train. At night I had to rout him out of the cosiest corner in the officers' quarters at the *étape*.

At Hoi Yan he was filled with indignation and discontent. His master and I slept out in the rain on the stone flags of the dirty Chinese courtyard. Sin Foo sat up all night watching

the horses and the packs of provisions. As it was the first night, so was it for many nights. His horses had no food, he himself had no sleep, his masters had no comfort. His expression came nigh to despair.

"Pony all light—Sin Foo all light! Pony no can chow-chow—Sin Foo all same makee die. Can go Liao Yang, masta'?"

And with newly-wakened hope he would make a dash at the saddle-bags to expedite our decision. But the time was not yet.

There came a night of awful thunder. The tree above our sleeping-place was rent asunder. The rivers came down in flood and swept away the possessions of the unwary. The pony compound was a slough waist-deep in water. Sin Foo miraculously saved our pack-saddles and their bundles. Middleton and I were sick with dysentery. Our mafoos cluttered about like half-drowned water-rats. I gave the order to on-saddle and trek back to healthier locations.

It was a strange procession backward, Middleton and I bent double with pain, our ponies stumbling wearedly in the mire, Sin Foo and my own Loo San recuperating rapidly. As we rode, I gathered strength and spirits. Middleton

grew steadily worse. Our only hope was the hospital thirty miles distant.

On the way, in the intervals of our suffering, Sin Foo entertained us with tales of his chop-dollar Chinese wife at Shan-hai-kwan, of his Japanese wife at Tientsin — a gift from some grateful German patron of the aforetime — extended invitations to visit him at either establishment.

We gained the gate of the hospital just as night and another thunder-storm fell. Middleton had a temperature of 103°, and was ordered to bed. I had a temperature of 101°, and was deemed convalescent.

The following morning Middleton's condition was beyond doubt. He would require some days in hospital, perhaps weeks. I left him comfortably installed in a separate pavilion, attended by French-speaking doctors and Sisters of Charity. Loo San and I rode back to Liao Yang. Sin Foo remained in charge of the ponies and his master's baggage. Circumstances took me from Liao Yang to Mukden, and from Mukden back again to Liao Yang. It was Sunday, June 26, before Lord Brooke and I set out again for the hospital and the front.

SIN FOO'S JUSTIFICATION

It was a day of terrible heat and awful dust. Suddenly round a corner, out of a smother of sand, emerged Sin Foo. The little figure in velveteens launched itself from the pony and came running forward. I drew up my horse and waited. Sin Foo uncoiled his pigtail and from its recesses withdrew a letter. It was a plaintive little note in doubtful French, evidently dictated that day by Middleton. It ran:

"MON CHER DOUGLAS,—Revenez ici tout de suite pour régler mes affaires. Je suis très sèrieux. Dites aux autres correspondants."

HENRY MIDDLETON.

LANJANSAN, *26th Juin*, 1904.

Hastily scrawling a pencilled note to my comrades in Liao Yang I gave it to Sin Foo. Brooke and I continued our way.

That night we arrived at Siu-lin-tse, and there we dined. It was our intention to sleep at the *étape* and to push on at daybreak the following morning. We were just about to retire when an army surgeon I had known at the Front slid from a dusty horse and strode forward. Saluting, after the manner of the Russians, he said:

"Pardon, m'sieu, mais votre ami—il est mort!"

Pardon sir, but your friend is dead

I staggered. The cheeriest of the correspondents dead — it was impossible! I turned to Brooke:

"It is not true."

Albeit, it was with a heavy heart that we onsaddled and started, under a glorious moon, to ride the fifteen miles to Lanjansan. In grim silence we galloped onward, forded and reforded the Tai-tse-ho. Big bluffs stood black and threatening on each side of us. Occasional Cossack despatch-riders clattered past—phantom figures in the moonlight. Only once I heard Brooke's voice in the night-time, as my pony stumbled over a boulder:

"Steady, old man, it may all be a mistake."

But it was not a mistake. Little Middleton lay dead, and the lad, who had lain beside me on the cold stones and on many a Chinese kwang, had gone from his first campaign before almost he had realised the true significance of war.

Next morning the rains were definitely upon us. All mud-bespattered, Sin Foo sprang from his saddle about noon-time. He ran forward to me:

"What thing, my masta'?"

"Your master all same makee die, Sin Foo."

I think I saw a tear ooze out from between the half-closed slats of his Eastern eyes, but I may have been mistaken.

The interment was ordered for half-past five that Monday afternoon. The boy lay in a coffin covered with white cloth, with a great red cross along its length, in a tent by the side of the entrance gate. Above his head, on the tent pole, was a Russian icon. Brooke and I led Sin Foo to the little canvas chapel, let him bid farewell to his master.

As the hour for the interment arrived large numbers of wounded from the battle of Motien-ling were borne into the hospital. The claims of the dying took precedence of the rites to the dead, and it was seven o'clock before we gathered about the door of the tent to attend the funeral service over little Middleton.

That service was inexpressibly impressive. Father Theodosi, the chief of the Pokrofsky Monastery in Moscow, officiated. He was attended by one of the hospital assistants as acolyte. Beside the tent was a little knot of nurses who, led by a Cossack officer and assisted by the surgeons of the hospital, sang the low minor music for the dead. Father

Theodosi, in the full robes of the Greek Church embroidered with crosses of red upon a white ground, intoned the prayers and swung the incense from a silver censer. Outside, in the lashing rain, the soldiers newly wounded from Motienling, their big red arms and legs swathed in bloody bandages, knelt in the mud and joined in the prayers. Beyond in the roadway every passing soldier uncovered and crossed himself. It was infinitely pathetic, wonderfully memorable.

Then we started on the way to the grave, led by the choir of sisters and doctors, the acolyte with the cross, and the pope with the censer. We followed the coffin borne on soldiers' shoulders, across the lush, green kiaolang fields, under a blinding rain, to the little hillock where already three soldier-dead lay buried. There little Middleton was reverently lowered into the deep trench, the last prayers were said, the last hymn sung, a few handfuls of earth thrown in, and the grave filled up.

By some inspiration of tenderness Sin Foo cut a long wisp of trailing wild clematis, draped it over the Greek cross; then silently, solemnly, we trudged back to the hospital.

CHAPTER XVIII

COSSACK CAVALRY

THE present campaign has been robbed of the spectacular accompaniment of cavalry engagements. There has been no opportunity to use horse soldiers save for scouting and vidette duty. Even then the work more effectively has been performed by spies and men on foot. The Japanese in the most hazardous cavalry reconnaissances have marched a company of infantry along with their squadrons of horse. The Russians have used their Cossacks under Rennenkampf, and Mistchenko, and Sampsonoff, more particularly for raiding purposes than for the proper work of cavalry. They have been set to harass the flanks and rear of the advancing enemy.

The great reason for this subordination of the most effective arm of the Russian forces has been the nature of the ground upon which the

Japanese chose to invite battle. Long ago, General Kuropatkin, discussing the strategy of the war, said: "My strategy is dictated by the strategy of the Japanese."

What is true of the strategy of the war is equally true of the tactics of particular engagements. The Japanese have no cavalry upon which they can rely in time of stress or in pushing home pursuit. Consequently, they have kept themselves to the hills while the plains were yet suitable for horse exercise, have descended to the flats only when the rains had rendered them impossible for cavalry. Their manœuvres in the fields about Liao Yang and Mukden were indulged in only after the kiaolang crop had grown to a height completely to envelop mounted men and so to render concerted attack impossible.

In the Boxer rising of 1900 troops of opposing cavalry passed through such kiaolang fields within three hundred yards of one another without either being aware of the other's vicinity. The lesson learned then has availed the Japanese much in the present War. They have fought the War on their remarkable analysis of the character of the Russians and upon their intimate

acquaintance with the physical conditions of the field of battle.

General Kuropatkin had a large force of cavalry, an insufficient number of guns. The Japanese had a magnificently equipped artillery, an unreliable force of cavalry. The Japanese throughout have given battle on artillery positions where their guns outnumbered and outdistanced those of the Russians, leaving to their infantry the task of forcing positions minutely searched by shrapnel for long periods before the final assault was delivered.

In these circumstances General Kuropatkin's cavalry have merely been a burden to him, a constant drain upon his commissariat. What the Russians need is more guns and better guns. What the Japanese need is a force of cavalry to secure them the fruits of their victory, to clear the ground of their demoralised enemy.

Steppe-bred cavalry are useless in Korean mountains and in Manchurian mud-flats. Their very tactics are designed for hard-bottomed, rolling prairies, where a horse can gallop as on a race-course, where speed can exact its toll.

Once only, to my knowledge, have the Cossacks in the present War had opportunity to develop

a fight after their own manner. It is the custom of the artist of the illustrated journals to arm all Cossacks with a long and wicked lance. Of all the Cossacks, only a very few carry pig-stickers, and those are the Cossacks of Western Siberia. The Cossacks of Eastern Siberia, the Cossacks of the Trans-Baikal, the Cossacks of the Caucasus, carry nothing but their sabre and their rifle.

It was in the last weeks of May, when the Japanese were establishing themselves on the peninsula of Liao Tung, north of Port Arthur, that the Cossacks found their opportunity. A sotnia of Russian Cossacks was opposed by a considerable force of Japanese infantry.

The Cossacks disposed of themselves, according to the manner of their people, in a line of sections, each section consisting of thirty men, the distance between the sections being thirty yards, the distance between the files six feet. This line of sections veiled a battery placed in the centre and immediately to the rear of the cavalry screen. At the order, the two wing sections pivotted on their inner men, attacked the enemy at an angle of 45°. The centre section advanced in direct attack, breaking to

WEST SIBERIAN COSSACKS.

COSSACKS OF THE TRANS-BAIKAL.

right and left half-way across the intervening space and so revealed the battery in their rear.

In this formation the Cossacks swept down upon the enemy, the wings extending in two great horns to envelop the Japanese, the centre dividing into half sections and wheeling into the two lines of attack. The moment the centre was cleared, the battery poured in a storm of shrapnel, the Cossacks, lance at rest, charged upon the Japanese from both flanks, the battery ceased fire. The Cossacks, having penetrated the forces of the enemy, about-faced, and a second time swept the field, yelling their tribal slogans. The field cleared, the battery completed the rout of the Japanese, the Cossacks pursuing them up to the ranks of their supports.

The Japanese never again have given their enemy opportunity to practise this characteristic Cossack manœuvre of the "lava."

CHAPTER XIX

CAMP-FOLLOWERS AND DISCIPLINE

IT was at Hoi Yan I saw two examples of the discipline maintained by General Keller. At early morning I had gone to the suttler's hut in search of tea, when there came in a grey-haired Chinaman, white with apprehension. Mistaking me for an officer, he begged that I would come to assist him in some trouble that threatened his household. Being one without authority, I referred him to the police commissaire, and journeyed forth to see what was the matter. An officer of Engineers, a Georgian Cossack, having drunk deep of the red wine of his native Caucasus, had broken in upon the women's quarters of the Chinaman's habitation, and had there alarmed the younger girls of the household. When I appeared he was in the wide outer room of the house, volubly protesting at the misconstruction which his action had provoked. As the Chinese crowded round I saw

him half draw his sword. At this moment of crisis the General suddenly appeared, walking quietly and all unruffled down the little street between the hovels. Instantly silence succeeded uproar, and the flushed face of the Georgian paled at the encounter. Count Keller leaned very quietly against the open window and spoke long and earnestly with the officer standing at the salute within.

Later the Georgian and I became close comrades. I learned to like him in a way that our introduction could not have foretold. In the days of our acquaintanceship, however, his captain's badges had been removed, and my friend was but a second lieutenant. Strong commanders of the stamp of Kuropatkin and Keller permitted no rowdyism in the officers under their command.

It was at Hoi Yan, too, that I saw the heavy, dark-bearded face of an officer peering out of a grim, dirty fangza, before which stood a sentry with fixed bayonet. I saw him through the torn paper window, and the sentinel called his attention to the figure of the foreigner without. He came forward with a cigarette between his lips, and gazed long and interestedly at me.

I learned that he was an officer of Cossacks, waiting the decision of the court-martial which had tried him for commandeering stores from the Chinese without payment. I rode back with the Judge-Colonel of the military tribunal which had been trying the case. A chance remark drew from him the statement that the officer had been sentenced to death; he added, however, that the case was absolutely an isolated one, and was little likely to recur.

Those are the only two cases of collision between the Russian officers and the people of the country which I saw at any time during my stay in Manchuria. Regulations to prevent trouble, and to regulate the punishment for it, were the earliest drafted and the most rigorously adhered to in the War.

Troops long time quartered in Manchuria had grown unruly and unreliable. General Kuropatkin lost little time in weeding out incompetent Generals. Corps-commanders and Generals of Division dealt with all cases of insubordination and incompetence according to the strictest military law in time of war.

One friend of my own was a young officer, a second lieutenant. He was granted sick-leave

by his Colonel. Making a rapid recovery, and eager to distinguish himself, he took advantage of what he considered his permission to run the blockade into Port Arthur. He was successful in the attempt, and returned with very important despatches from General Stoessel. Those he delivered first to the Viceroy at Mukden, was highly commended for his action, and promised the St George's Cross. Next he reported himself and his doings to General Kuropatkin; again was commended and promised the Commander-in-Chief's interest to obtain him the decoration. Then he returned to his regiment and reported himself to his Colonel. The Colonel heard his report, and said: "Sir, I am glad you have returned to your regimental duties in good health, but you have broken the regulations of war by proceeding without leave to Port Arthur; you are under arrest and will be tried by court-martial." The young officer told me the tale himself. The next thing I heard was that he had been ordered to be shot.

Much has been written by unknowing foreigners of the want of discipline in the army of the Czar, but in every instance for which I can personally vouch, the charges were less serious, and the

punishments more severe than in any army with which previously I have been connected.

Viceroy Alexeieff and General Kuropatkin by their quiet and ascetic lives afforded an example which gave force to their orders against drunkenness and disorderliness. Those orders were enforced with a rigour which would astonish resident correspondents who know the officer only from his appearance in the relaxation of the great towns of Russia. All three censors were teetotallers. General Keller drank nothing but a little Crimean red wine or an occasional half-bottle of champagne. The surgeons-in-chief in both hospitals in which I resided were teetotallers. My experience was that all men in positions of high command were as temperate as their brothers of England or America. In this, as in other matters, a distinction must be drawn between the officers of the army and the officers of the navy. Russians themselves make the distinction in ordinary conversation.

Much has been written of the officers who took women with them to the War, and here again only a personal experience is able to justify a judgment. Officers sent to Manchuria looked upon their service there as exile, and

formed local attachments in the days of peace which remained in force after war had become an actuality. The ordinary life of a garrison town, by the circumstances of events, was suddenly turned into an appearance of licence in camp. It was forgotten by the commentators that the women one saw there were the women present before the outbreak of hostilities, and every commander set himself to rid his quarters of the nuisance so soon as he possibly could. Port Arthur was cleared within three days of the first attack, and, although certain of its bedraggled residents succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the police commissaire in the towns of Liao Yang and Mukden, it was not long till they, too, were ordered to move on.

Much that has passed for war correspondence has emanated from Harbin. Conditions of life in that squalid town have been accepted as the state of things in the actual theatre of War. The truth was far different. In Harbin were met the two currents of humanity — the women sent north from Port Arthur and Dalny, Newchwang and Liao Yang; and the other current southward of harpies attracted by the promise of reward upon the field of battle. Harbin, at the

time of my visit there, was as the Johannesburg of 1896, as the mining towns of Western America, and as the Cape Town of the days immediately after the War.

Russia has had to face the same problem that every nation has faced in war time, and has faced it with just the same determination as its neighbours.

CHAPTER XX

THE OPERATIONS IN THE EAST

ON June 6, General Count Keller, established in rainy-quarters at Hoi Yan, had his army of the East extended from Tsaumatse, where General Grekov held the extreme left of the Russian position, to Siu Yen, where General Mistchenko was in touch with the left of General Stakelberg's army and with the army of General Sarubaeff. In the extreme south, the Russian forces extended to Wafangho; in the extreme south-east, to General Kashtalinski's position at Tung-yun-pu, a distance of about twenty-five miles from Feng-hoang-cheng, the headquarters of General Kuroki and the first Japanese army. On June 7, General Kuroki sent out a column which drove General Grekov from his position and occupied Tsaumatse. On June 8, General Kuroki's southern column co-operated with a column from Taku-shan, and

those troops occupied Siu Yen. It had been General Kuroki's intention to make a combined attack on all the eastern positions on June 8, but the precipitation of the attack upon Tsaumatse robbed the movement of its complete success. Reinforcements from General Count Keller permitted Grekov to retake the position at Tsaumatse, and, for a fortnight, it belonged alternately to Russian and to Japanese.

The evening of June 14 was a time of remarkable importance in the fortunes of the two armies. General Baron Stakelberg was in grips with the Japanese at Wafangho. Kuroki was advancing from his headquarters at Feng-hoang-cheng, and the Japanese were closing in upon all the positions along the dangerously extended Russian front. On June 15, the battle of Wafangho was fought, and General Baron Stakelberg had to retire upon Kai-chau. The same day Kuroki drove back Kashtalinski's advance guard, and my donkey train of transport found itself within two thousand yards of the Japanese before it realised that retreat was the order of the day.

On the evening of June 15, General Count Keller broke up his rainy-season camp at Hoi

Yan and moved out in support of his advance guards at Lien-shan-hoang.

Those who are most in the fight see least of the war, and the idea behind the Japanese attack was not at first sight intelligible to me. Without doubt the Japanese knew that General Kuroki had been forced to withdraw many of the troops from General Count Keller in order to strengthen his forces in the south. Consequently, it was apparent that, either the Japanese were making an attempt to force the positions on their right flank before the rainy-season should render operations in the mountains impossible, or were making a demonstration in force to cover their attack upon General Baron Stakelberg in the south. The general impression among officers was that the attack upon the east was merely a demonstration. This demonstration would have been successful but for the vigilance of Keller.

The rain burst on the morning of June 17, and the condition of the troops in consequence was wretchedly uncomfortable. The rain found us, in the army of the East, inadequately supplied with provisions. The troops possessed no boots, and in many instances no tunics. We had an

inadequate supply of guns, and our information with respect to the enemy was of the most meagre and conflicting description.

Here, as at all times, the Russians were face to face with a difficulty which did not present itself to the forces of the enemy. We were an army in retreat. They were an army on the advance. The result was, as the Chinese candidly confessed, that, while every inhabitant was a spy on behalf of the enemy, not one would give information to the Russians. Asked the reason for this they said: "The Japanese are advancing upon us; if we give you information you will withdraw to-morrow, and we shall have our heads cut off by the in-coming troops. When it is your turn to advance we shall be most happy to oblige you with information; meanwhile you can expect nothing from us."

The result was that the Japanese not only possessed the enormous advantage which their own similarity to the people of the country afforded them, but they possessed in the resident population a constant and voluntary Bureau of Information. The Chinese moved uninterruptedly from force to force, speaking openly to the Japanese, remaining silent in the

presence of the Russians. At this time our information was of the worst possible, and I myself heard General Count Keller complain that on four occasions he had moved his troops out, in response to Cossack reports, against a non-existent enemy.

On June 22, General Rennenkampf moved his Cossacks, with a regiment of infantry and some guns, against the Japanese reconnoitring force outside Tsaumatse. As a result, General Count Keller was enabled to assure himself of the strength of the Japanese column threatening his left flank.

On June 26, General Count Keller's army occupied the passes of Fen-shui-ling—upon which General Mistchenko had retired from Siu Yen—Motien-ling, and Ta-ling. On June 26, the Japanese, in three columns, attacked the Russians at Fen-shui-ling over a front of some twenty miles. Our right was fiercely attacked by the enemy that day, covering a wide turning movement which developed on the morning of June 27. Completely outnumbered, the Russians had to retire from the position after burning stores and ammunition. Imperative orders from headquarters forced a renewal of the battle on the

afternoon of Monday, June 27, but no change resulted in the situation.

On the same day of June 27, the Japanese attacked the Ta-ling Pass, and with overwhelming forces, both of infantry and artillery, drove the Russians back upon To-mu-chan. To complete that day of disaster the Japanese, three divisions strong, attacked Count Keller's skeleton force at the Motien-ling. The positions had been well prepared, but the Japanese advanced along a secret mountain track and completely out-flanked the Russian position. Count Keller withdrew his force to Lien-shan-hoang.

The General himself, mounted on an ordinary troop-horse, rode from position to position, inspecting the ground, studying the possibilities of resistance now that he had lost the whole line of passes which he had calculated upon holding until the end of the rainy season, when he hoped to have received reinforcements which would make his positions permanent.

I myself was busy in those days with the affairs of my dead friend Middleton. The first wounded from Motien-ling arrived at Lanjansan—the advance hospital—about five o'clock on the evening of June 27. They were in bad condition,

and had suffered terribly from the awful surface of the road, softened with rain and ploughed up with heavy transport. The morning of June 28, I was astonished to meet Count Keller's troops in full retreat. They came into Lanjansan tired, dispirited, and drenched. The rains were terrible. The General and his Staff rested at Lanjansan for a meal. It was his purpose to place the troops in the positions behind the village, and I rode out to view their state of preparation. Those positions had been formed long time previously, and were scientifically placed on the hills commanding the wide strath of which Lanjansan occupied the centre. The positions were good, but there was an insufficiency of troops at hand to occupy them. However, such as they were, the men moved into position on the uplands governing the valley. Roads had been cut along the faces of the hills and artillery emplacements prepared on the crests. These last were connected with Siu-lin-tse, twelve miles distant.

Of Count Keller's meagre forces, the 9th and 12th regiments had been lent to the army at Hai-cheng to strengthen it against the expected attack from the direction of Siu Yen. It appeared to me that, that day of June 28, the

Japanese might have marched into Liao Yang practically without opposition.

The General continued his inspection as far as the positions at Hazaling, but finding none of them satisfactory to his purpose, and receiving reports that the Japanese were forcing his rear-guard at Yang-tse-ling, he hastily returned, marched his troops back over the road which they had covered, to the rocky strongholds at Yang-tse-ling, and there installed them.

It is difficult to write of the state of the roads at this time in the Liao Valley. Cart-traffic had become practically impossible. Twenty-five per cent. of every baggage train lay on the roadside, derelict. Cavalry were useless, and artillery could not be manœuvred. The rivers were running strong and full, and men were drowned in the endeavour to ford them. The troops bivouacked on morasses, and preferred to march barefoot to carrying the heavy mud which their boots collected. All the time the rain seeped down, and a marching column consisted of mud-encased stragglers covering miles of road. Officers and men trudged on silently, unsociably, disconsolately. Men worn by the labour of the march, racked by fever

THE MEN'S LINES.

THE RAINY SEASON CAMP AT HOI YAN.

and dysentery, lay down in the liquid filth utterly exhausted, and many there died. Progress of any kind was slow, and yet General Keller was opposing an army of three divisions with a force of little more than two regiments.

On the night of June 29, when Keller had arrived back from his visit of inspection, he met the Japanese on the Yang-tse-ling with three battalions and no artillery. The attack had merely the value of a rear-guard action, and, on June 30, the General withdrew, having lost fifty men. It was then expected that General Keller would withdraw to Siu-lin-tse, where he would have opportunity to use his artillery. News reached him, however, that General Kuropatkin had despatched to his assistance the 9th and 12th East Siberian Regiments, and a portion of the 10th Army Corps with its complement of guns, cavalry and infantry. The Japanese, surprised at the energy of his recuperation, and suffering from the condition of the roads as much as the Russians, at once withdrew to the positions at Motien-ling. Keller again advanced and occupied the positions on the rocky divide. It was but another figure in the *contre-danse.*

General Keller now lay with his main position

at Yang-tse-ling, with his outposts at the pagoda opposite Hoi Yan, four miles farther on. He thus was in personal command of the central position on the east guarding the gate of Liao Yang, with General Grekov in command on his left.

On June 29 the Japanese occupied, without fighting, the pass of Fen-shui-ling which had been entrusted to General Grekov. As a result General Shatilof replaced that distinguished old cavalry officer. It was now essential that General Keller should discover the strength of the Japanese opposed to him. To that end, taking advantage of a fog on the night of July 3, he ordered a reconnaissance. That evening he left his quarters, at Niu-tee-i, accompanied by Colonel Aranovsky, his Chief of Staff, and Captain Skoropatsky, his aide-de-camp, and proceeded to the advance-posts at the pagoda, where we arrived at eight o'clock.

The outposts consisted of one battalion of infantry, and Count Keller brought with him from the quarters of the Third Division at Yang-tse-ling, one additional battalion and three companies of infantry. These, joined with the battalion post at the pagoda, formed his reconnoitring force. This force he split up into two

parties. One, of three companies, he ordered to advance along the road towards the right to the village of Makumensa, from which place his scouts had reported the presence of Japanese. The other party consisted of two battalions, and was ordered to advance along the road beyond Hoi Yan to investigate the positions at Motien-ling.

The force of three companies, under command of Colonel Garnetsky, at once proceeded on its march to the right. The pioneers, under Lieutenant Koochin, after three hours' march, found themselves in the midst of the Japanese outposts. Lieutenant Koochin himself cut down the first guard with his sword. A Japanese shot Lieutenant Koochin through the body, and was in turn killed by one of the party. The three companies then closed in, and, attacking with the bayonet, drove back the outposts upon the main body. The result of this reconnaissance was perfectly satisfactory, and Colonel Garnetsky was able to withdraw his force in darkness about half-past one o'clock in the morning. He reported the presence at Makumensa of two Japanese regiments.

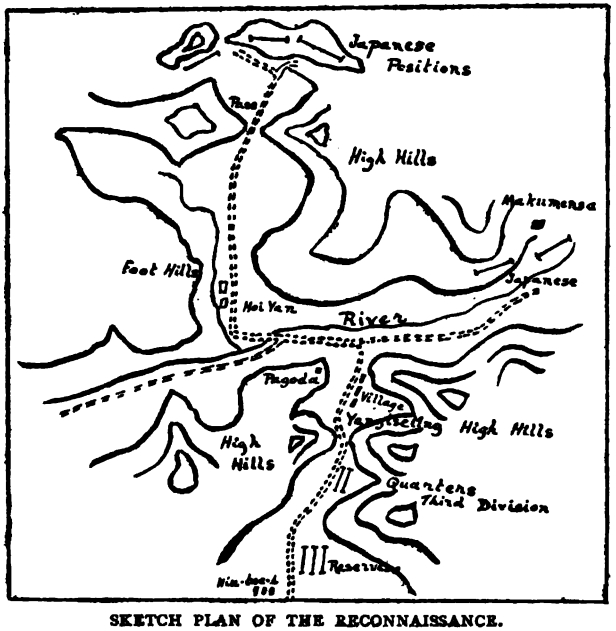
The second column, which I personally ac-

companied, under Colonel Lischetsky of the 24th regiment of East Siberian Rifles, consisted of two battalions. Our orders were to preserve strict silence in the ranks and not to fire whatever the provocation, to develop the Japanese positions, and to report upon the constitution of their force.

We set off along the heavy road parallel to the river, the rushing of the waters drowning the noise of the trampling battalions. We forded the river opposite our old rainy-season quarters and started out on the road to Motien-ling. Very silently we marched between the steep, black hills that rise from the mountain-path, wooded on the right, bare and naked on the left. We had marched some eight miles from the pagoda, stubbornly uphill, and yet had not found the enemy. We crossed the divide and continued, under some apprehension now, because the distance of our march added to the danger of the enterprise.

We were in among the Japanese before ever we had realised their presence. They were asleep, and absolutely taken by surprise. We drove back their outposts, and for a time there was nothing but the sound of great men cursing

in their wrath, and of little men sighing as the cold steel found them. It was but an instant till the Japanese all along the heights of what the Russians call the "Tagoling," opened fire upon their unseen enemy in the darkness. We suffered but little from the fusillade, but by



SKETCH PLAN OF THE RECONNAISSANCE.

means of it discovered the Japanese positions. The stout Siberian soldiers pressed onward up the hills, and succeeded in driving the half-wakened Japanese from their positions.

The hand-to-hand fighting now became fearful in its intensity. Men forgot all but the longing to kill. Time was passing. Before Colonel Lischetsky could call his men from the combat, dawn was on the point of breaking. As the day lightened, the Japanese realised the paucity of the force attacking them, and at once worked back to their positions on the crests of the hills and poured in a murderous fire. They had no guns, otherwise but few of us would have covered the eight weary miles that lay between us and our supports. As it was, Keller lost a hundred killed and two hundred and eighty wounded, while the Japanese losses were estimated at many more.

Full day was on us before the Russians extricated themselves from the trap in which light had found them. The Japanese followed us back almost to Hoi Yan, and Lischetsky's battle-weary men had to fight a rear-guard action all the way home to Hoi Yan. After that there were five terrible miles to climb until we reached the shelter of the Yang-tse-ling.

As a reconnaissance the operation was perfectly successful. The Japanese positions were developed and defined, and their strength determined as one

division and one additional regiment of guards. Some few Japanese prisoners were taken in the *melée*; all were miserably clad and suffering from dysentery.

As I rode back to Liao Yang I realised how wonderfully successful had been the Japanese operations in the east, but when I thought of the sparsity of the Russian forces and the extension of the Front, I understood the reason of it. I became a believer in General Kuropatkin's policy of concentration. At Siu-lin-tse I learned that Marshal Oyama had left Tokio, on July 6, as Japanese Commander-in-Chief in Manchuria, with General Kodama as Chief of Staff. Dimly, I foresaw the gradual garrotting of the Russian armies, the tightening of the band upon Liao Yang.

CHAPTER XXI

ADMIRAL ALEXEIEFF

WHILE every eye, this month of July, is focussed on Liao Yang and the figures of the fighters there, there is a personality of vastly greater importance from whom the world has withdrawn its gaze.

Here, in Mukden, in the narrow compass of a railway-car, rests the inspiration of all the forces in Manchuria. The army, the navy, the diplomacy of the Russian Orient are all controlled by one man, by a grave and silent Consul, who is at once Commander-in-Chief, Admiral-in-Chief, Magistrate-in-Chief, and Director of Foreign Policy.

His Imperial Majesty's Viceroy in the Far East, the Admiral Alexeieff, is a Dictator in Manchuria, administers a country twice the size of Japan, has power of life and death over the sixteen million people there. To him the

Generals report, the Admirals submit their dispositions, the magistrates refer their judgments. In him is personified the policy of Russian evolution.

For two hundred years Russia has sought a free seaboard and an outlet to markets. From Peter the Great to Nicholas Alexandrovitch, the policy of each successive Czar of Russia has been the same. In vain each in turn has sought to cut his way southward to the sea at Constantinople, eastward to the sea in the Persian Gulf, seaward across the long land route of Siberia. It was left to Admiral Alexeieff to open the gate in the Yellow Sea. It was left to Viceroy Alexeieff to keep it open.

Japan for a moment, by dint of superhuman energy, by reason of excessive effort, may avail to close the gate, but it cannot hold it shut. Viceroy Alexeieff represents not only a settled policy, but a natural law. Russia has glided eastward since, in 1722, Peter the Great first wrested his Persian provinces from the Shah, with the ever-increasing momentum of the glacier. Japan may impede for an insignificant instant its final debouchure on the sea: it is impotent permanently to arrest its

progress thither. A law as immutable as the law of gravity predestines Russia to its seaboard in the East.

It is to emphasize the inevitability of this destiny that Russia's troops at present are waging war in Manchuria. Japan has sought to close the gate, has challenged Russia's right to an outlet for her commerce in the open waters of the China seas, has endeavoured to wrench territory from the Czar. In Viceroy Alexeieff reposes the trust of the Empire to keep the gate open.

The man upon whom rests this grave responsibility is a man born to the position. Vested with unlimited power, he lives the life of an ascetic. A bachelor, his life is dedicated to the service of his country and his Czar. A man of absolute authority, he toils with unremitting energy. A sailor, he lives in the cabined precincts of a railway-car. A maker of captains and a dispenser of positions, he is simple of habit and devoid of ostentation. In the inborn dignity of the man rests the insignia of his high office.

At once gentle of manner and stern of principle, the Viceroy is a man broad-shouldered

and masculine. Grey-bearded and wide-browed, his Excellency's face is sad and infinitely reflective in repose. He bears the mien of one on whose lightest word great destinies may depend, rather than the alert aspect of a commander in the field. Judge of the Court of Last Appeal, the responsibility is impressed upon his manner. He is reserved, deliberate, judicial. It is not until he walks one realises the latent energy in the man. His step is quick and assured, firm and straightforward, the step of a man of absolute resource and self-reliance. He walks with the carriage of a man of definite purpose, of a man with an object to attain and a clear perception of how to attain it, of a man of invincible resolution.

A man of wide sympathies and catholic understanding, his world of interest extends to the remotest confines of the earth. A patriot, he is no Chauvinist. A champion of Russian development, he believes that he can so best serve the common objects of civilisation. Careful in matters of detail, his mind is set upon the great things, upon the ultimate destinies of his nation.

Viceroy Alexeieff stands for a policy—a

policy of inflexible fixity of purpose, of unbending resolution to acclaim Russia's inalienable right to an open port in the China seas, to speed Russia's emancipation from the landlocked thraldom that has curbed her development for two hundred years.

It is no selfish policy. It is no antagonistic policy. It is a policy inspired by the desire to combine Russia's interests with the interests of the other Powers. Viceroy Alexeieff will retreat from nothing that he stated prior to the outbreak of hostilities. His policy then is his policy now. It is the policy of his Imperial Master, the policy he was sent to the Orient to execute in virtue of his office as Viceroy.

I have his Excellency's authority for stating that that policy is a permanent one wholly unaffected by the incidents of the war. I seek no better guarantee.

CHAPTER XXII

ESPIONAGE

JAPAN has endeavoured to raise the business of espionage to the standing of an honourable profession. She herself regards her spies with the same pride that she respects her soldiers. She has reason, because the spies of Japan are actuated by patriotism, and not by the material reward which in past times has degraded the calling.

Japan's success in the War is directly attributable to the excellence of her espionage system. When I crossed the Siberian railway in the troubled weeks of September, 1903, among the coolies at work on the tunnels and the embankments, I frequently recognised labouring Japanese. It was not until I realised that those coolies were actually officers of Engineers in the Japanese army, and colonels of the General Staff, that I understood to what

extremities his devotion to Nippon would carry the little yellow man.

At Newchwang there was only one hairdresser, a little Japanese, who assiduously cut the hair of every Russian officer of the garrison until some weeks after war had broken out. That barber was a captain of the Japanese regular army.

Every one remembers the incident of the Japanese officers who, disguised as Chinese, were arrested in the early days of the War, when about to make an attempt to blow up the bridge over the Sungari river. The rank of the senior was that of colonel, and before they went out to stand against the Russian platoon of infantry they specially bequeathed the money in their pockets to the uses of the Russian Red Cross. Such men are not spies of ordinary calibre.

Time and again throughout the War I saw little groups of Japanese spies captured among the gangs of coolies on the railway, among the Chinese peasantry carrying water to the soldiers in the firing-line, among the crowds in the bigger cities. There was a story at Liao Yang that a Japanese scout, captain of cavalry, rode into

the city in full uniform, examined all the fortifications, and was finally arrested on the chance word of an ultra-suspicious Russian officer. To understand the possibility of this it is necessary to have seen the Buriat Cossacks in the service of the Czar. Many of those men are as Japanese in type as any citizen of Tokio.

The efficiency of the Japanese spy within the Russian lines was infinitely greater than that of any possible Russian agent with the forces of the Japanese. The Japanese spy had at his disposition thousands of Chinese willing to carry whatever despatches he might entrust to them out of the lines, for a consideration of forty cents per hour expended on the journey. A Russian spy with the Japanese might be possessed of any amount of information, but he alone could carry it to the point from which it could be communicated—messenger he could find none. Elsewhere I make mention of the evidence I had of Japanese using flashlight signals in the night-time. That those were systematically organised and constantly in use throughout the campaign is beyond question.

When the Caucasian Cossacks landed at the Front they were surrounded by their fellow-

religionists, Chinese Mahomedans, with whom they made quick friends as brothers in the Moslem faith. These Chinese readily acknowledged that they were spies in the Japanese interest, but refused to convey information even to the Mahomedan Russians, in view of the circumstances of the case.

From Mukden to Sin-min-ting was but forty miles, and, daily, Chinese runners covered the distance with despatches. Only our word of honour prevented the correspondents from using that channel as a means to evade the Censorate. Two correspondents—an Italian and a Frenchman—broke their promise and were requested by the Russians to leave the Manchurian army. To show how simple evasion was, two American correspondents, who desired to cross the lines and so return to their own country by way of Japan without facing the severe regulations made by the Russians for the withdrawal of journalists from the theatre of war, merely hired Peking carts and drove out of Mukden at the first opening of the city gates. To me it was a matter for congratulation when the Chief Censor one day pointed out that no British correspondent had made any attempt to break the

THE SOUP KITCHENS.

AN EVENING BIVOUAC.

regulations which all of us had signed with a full understanding of their purport. Journalistic enterprise is one thing, but the British correspondent alone seems to regard his personal honour as superior to his professional interests.

To mark their appreciation of espionage as a distinct branch of honourable warfare, the Japanese did a curious thing after the battle of Liao Yang. They captured a Russian spy dressed as a Chinaman, and, after shooting him, passed into the Russian lines a communication in which they hailed him as a brave man, and expressed the hope that the Russian troops held many others such as he. When one remembers the execration with which spies have been hailed by other nationalities, this Eastern exaltation of the calling is, to say the least of it, curious.

One form of espionage, which certainly does not commend itself to the corrrespondent, is the leakage of telegrams throughout all the offices in the East. When I went to Shanghai I was told I need not trouble to go farther, because a sufficient payment would secure me copies of all telegrams passing through the offices there. I and my colleagues tested the truth of this statement, and found it so.

In this connection I was told a curious story by my friend, Baron von Hoven, of the Viceroy's General Staff. He told me that, on February 5, a Chinaman came to him and offered to sell an important telegram passing from one Japanese to another. The Baron, having had long experience of the Chinese, demanded information as to the contents before he would undertake to make the purchase. He was told that in three days' time the Japanese would attack Port Arthur. The Baron promptly made a report to his colonel, but at the same time pointed out that the statement was undoubtedly a lie, as no Chinaman would give away such important information without first receiving pay. As the Baron remarked, "I was too clever." The consequence was, the information was not sent to Port Arthur, and, on February 8, Admiral Togo justified the honesty of the Chinaman.

Another friend of mine, a captain on the General Staff, was despatched from Mukden to Peking, in the month of May, upon a secret mission. Speaking English, and dressed in mufti, he travelled as an ordinary American citizen. The Chinese, however, had instructions from General Ma to waylay all Russian agents attempt-

ing to communicate with the outer world through neutral territory. Consequently the unfortunate captain was arrested at Kin-chau-foo, in Mongolia, on suspicion as a Russian spy.

It happened that a day or two before, poor Louis Etzel had been killed by Chinese soldiers, and the United States authorities were making matters most unpleasant for the officials concerned in the murder. Knowing this, my friend, who was a fluent Chinese scholar, at once affirmed his pseudo-nationality and claimed protection as an American citizen, threatening dire penalties if he were not immediately released. The Chinese, somewhat impressed, opened his baggage, and there found, among other military material, his sword and scabbard. Quickly seizing those, my friend belaboured the surrounding Chinese as punishment for their unwarrantable interference with his affairs, until the sword broke and he was left defenceless with the hilt in hand. The Chinese promptly pointed out the discrepancy between the American citizenship and the Russian service sword. The Captain, however, was an ingenious man, and affirmed that, although an American citizen, he was actually serving with the Russians, and cited

Sir Robert Hart as an example of an Englishman retaining his nationality yet serving as Head of the Imperial Maritime Customs of China.

Meanwhile he was eager to rid himself of a number of documents which he carried. Striding up to the chief Mandarin, he tore these before his face, and, before the Chinese could intervene, cast them dramatically upon the flickering fire at his side: "Now," he said, "you see what you have done. Those are my passports and my papers of identity; I shall go before the American Minister at Peking and tell him that you have insulted the American nation by forcing me to destroy them."

The bluff carried. The Chinese apologised, and insisted upon mending the sword—a feat no other nation's workmen could have accomplished—begged the captain to say nothing about the incident, and offered to cut off the head of the soldier who so improperly had arrested him. To mark his magnanimity, my friend refused the sacrifice, and so departed loaded down with expressions of gratitude from the Mandarins.

The most effective spies on behalf of the Russians were the officials of the yamens, especially the Russian interpreters. Those men

did a roaring trade during the War, selling their information impartially to both sides.

Our own designation in Chinese—"Wu fang scherin"—"the man who goes out to see"—was a matter of great perplexity to those higher officials of the Chinese magistracies. They regarded us as authorised spies, and with difficulty could be refrained from including us in their own nefarious trade. Espionage undoubtedly has its uses; but, the closer one sees it, the less one esteems it as a profession for the man of Western birth.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE SUMMIT OF THE TSIEN-CHAN

ON the night of June 14, I lay on the summit of the highest mountain of the Tsien-chan, in the position appointed by the Russians as a heliograph station. I had climbed to a point higher than the top of Snowdon, had arrived long after nightfall, and was alone there with the lieutenant in charge, the detail of four soldier operators, and my Cossack escort of two Buriats.

There was no moon; the last faint glow had died out in the west. The stars, incalculably distant, accentuated the blackness. The lights in the camp, a verst below my bedding-place, had veiled themselves in sleep. Night and the silence of night had frozen the earth.

Suddenly an eye blinked out of the darkness. The lieutenant straightened himself. The operator raised his night-glasses. Wink, wink,

winkety-wink, went the light in the distance. Our opticon signalled its attention. Rapidly the other station dotted and dashed its message. An assistant transcribed it from the operator's dictation. The light went out. The officer scanned the despatch by the glow of the bivouac fire, issued an order. The operator fetched an instrument fitted with a pneumatic release, placed it on the highest pinnacle of the mountain. We were encompassed with darkness.

For an instant, out of the night leaped crags, and boulders, and precipices, little Alpine plants, and the figures of men at attention. I started in apprehension. My friend the lieutenant calmed my excitement, muttered in French: "The magnesium flare — we are signalling the next station."

An eye wakened in the west. Our instrument transmitted its message, ended abruptly. The other intimated its receipt. The lieutenant turned to his blankets, bade me a courteous good-night, answered my silent questioning: "We must sleep well to-night. We shall have a long day to-morrow. There will be a battle down there." He nodded in the direction of

the station that recently had attracted our attention.

The first dawn met my eyes long before night had passed from the valleys. My comrades, save the Cossack Buriats, slept heavily. Alone I commanded a wonderful world of mountain-peaks and passes, of terra-cotta cliffs and pointed pyramids. The sun rose out of the Korean East and wakened the earth. Within four yards of my sleeping-place the mountain broke into a precipice whose base, a thousand feet below, was wrapped in the mist of morning. An eagle, three hundred feet beneath my feet, was poised in hungry expectancy. The falcons fluttered about their eyries in the rocky ledges. I withdrew from the verge of the precipice and waited the rousing of my companions.

Then up through some fissure of the mountain rose faintly the sound of a battle march. It came from the band of a regiment marching to reinforce the troops in the positions whence, the previous night, had come the summons. Our signal had brought relief.

My comrades were awake now, and stirring. The sun had penetrated to the lowlands. Mountain and valley lay spread about and

below me eastward to the headquarters of the Yalu and the Sungari; westward to the levels about the Liao-ho, with the pagoda of Liao Yang, sixty versts distant, emphasising their flatness; northward along the ridge of the range toward Mukden; southward to the peninsula of Liao Tung.

As I gazed, a puff of white cloud appeared above a hill. Another formed while I looked, and another. Dully upon the ear, felt rather than heard, came the rumble of artillery. The battle had begun. Our flash-lights had not lied.

On the top of a mountain a light beamed. It was answered by the heliographs of our operators, passed on in lightning gleams to other stations, to the headquarters of General Kuropatkin. The whole story of the fight flickered and flashed within three feet of me; yet was I impotent to interpret it. There is a sentiment stronger than etiquette which forbids one interrogating a confidential agent. There is a loyalty stronger than hospitality which preserves a Russian officer's knowledge from his friends.

The sun warmed and glowed upon the earth till the outline of the mountains lost its sharp-

ness, grew muzzed and indistinct. The uplands quivered in the heat-rays. The streams in the valleys shone as polished silver. Up there on the pinnacle, without shelter of tent or shade of tree, the sun beat as through a burning-glass. The earth baked and cracked. The rocks gave back the heat as from an oven. The metal instruments of the signal station scorched the hands of the operators.

The previous night I had marvelled at the number of stations, the multiplicity of signals. I sought enlightenment. It was then I learned that the telegraphists had been concerned with the constant exchange of flash-light messages from hills where no stations had been established, in codes different from those of the Russians, unintelligible to the operators.

Such signals, I was told, were common incidents of the night; but never had they been more active than on the night of June 14, the night before the battle of Wafangho. Chinese or Japanese, these signals indicated a system of exchange of information that boded no good for the little force of Russians in the advance positions. They were but one more instance of the wonderful scheme of espionage

that has cost the Russians more lives in this war than Japanese strategy or Japanese leadership. They were but one more proof that this is no war of Japanese upon Russian, but of the Yellow man upon the White man, of the East upon the West.

Days later, I learned that that night began the combined movement northward and westward of the Japanese from Wafangho to Tsaumatse. Those signals on the hilltops gave the explanation of its wonderful harmony of execution. Strategical unanimity ceases to be a miracle when the order enjoining it is passed from pinnacle to pinnacle through the enemy's lines by peasant parasites in pigtails.

CHAPTER XXIV

WAFANGHO

THERE was no correspondent, British or American, present at the battle of Wafangho on June 15. This account is based upon the statement of the man who planned the fight, an old comrade in other wars, the Chief of Staff of General Stakelberg.

The battle was designed by the Russians as a second Magersfontein. The infantry lay strongly entrenched in positions on the right of the railway. The guns were placed low down on the ground at the foot of the kopjes in the centre of the general position. The plan was to hold the Japanese with artillery and infantry in the valley, while a strong force of infantry made a turning movement on the left and permitted a general attack. The cavalry were held in reserve on the right.

To that end General Stakelberg ordered the

35th Brigade of Siberian Rifles to march at daybreak eastward behind the first line of hills, to encircle the Russian centre and the highlands beyond, and so come in upon the Japanese right about the time the main attack should have been developed.

The plan was robbed of its efficiency by the heavy reinforcements received by the Japanese in the course of the night of June 14. These reinforcements added four brigades to the Japanese right, and doubled its strength on that flank. At the same time men poured into the Japanese left, and enabled the enemy to occupy the village of Tiantantse with a strong force.

The Russian force detailed to effect the turning movement on the Japanese right at dawn did not leave its bivouac until eight o'clock in the morning, by which time the two armies were fully engaged. By nine o'clock it became apparent to General Stakelberg that something had gone wrong with his brigade on the left. He sent to demand an explanation, and at the same time issued orders indicating lines of retreat, should a withdrawal be rendered advisable.

The Brigadier in command of the 35th mis-

interpreted these instructions, and commenced at once to fall back upon his reserve position. By the time this error was corrected, the forenoon had practically passed, and the 35th Brigade came into action for the first time at eleven o'clock, when it gave welcome relief to the Japanese pressure upon the centre.

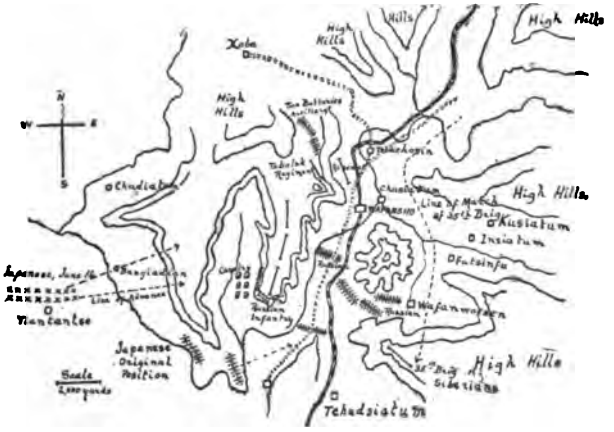
Meanwhile, the Japanese artillery had attacked our positions from a point in the loop of the river, some 4,500 yards to the south and west of the Russian main batteries. From there the enemy poured a terrible fire, marked by remarkable accuracy of range and precision of aim, upon the Russian guns. In fifteen minutes the Russian batteries were silenced, and at half-past nine o'clock were out of action.

The Japanese then shifted their guns to a position between the railway and the river, bombarded the station of Wafangho and the troops in the valley. The station buildings were destroyed, and the greater part of a Red Cross train in waiting there was shattered.

General Stakelberg meanwhile had not been idle. He had moved his infantry from their positions on the southern slopes of the hill to the top of the ridge parallel with the railway line.

At the same time, about eleven o'clock of the forenoon, he posted his reserves—five companies of the Tobolsk regiment, one regiment of the 35th Siberian Division, and two batteries of artillery—upon the hills overlooking the railway station of Wafangho and protecting his retreat by rail.

Freshly arrived reinforcements were detrained,



SKETCH PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF WAFANGHO.

and marched straight from the railway waggons to the spurs of the hills immediately west of the line.

At eleven o'clock, realising that he was outnumbered and over-weighted in artillery, General Stakelberg ordered the soup-kitchens and heavy transport to withdraw. The dust raised by the carts and mule-teams informed the Japanese of

the movement, and they at once pushed the infantry attack upon the Russian right. The 35th Siberian Brigade withdrew too late from its dangerous position on the enemy's right flank, and suffered severely in its long march under fire to regain the main column.

The Japanese force from Tiantantse successfully accomplished, in a wide turning movement, the manœuvre designed by General Stakelberg for his own left. The Russian reserves, however, materially strengthened by reinforcements, were able to meet and to repulse the attack, saving the Russian position and permitting the General to extricate his troops. At three o'clock in the afternoon the engagement was finished.

The fight had an importance altogether outside of its immediate result, because it confirmed the Japanese in their determination to tighten their grasp upon the Russian forces, changing their front from a number of isolated armies acting independently into one combined force operating with a common purpose—the closure upon Liao Yang. Reflexly, it enjoined upon General Kuropatkin the concentration which characterised all his strategy from June 15 to the battle of Liao Yang.

ARTILLERY CHANGING POSITION.

THE REGIMENTAL MEDICAL STAFF.

Although the honours of the battle—which was really an artillery engagement—fell to the Japanese, it amply demonstrated the Russian foot-soldier's dogged power of resistance and extra-ordinary ability to take punishment from an unseen enemy showering shrapnel upon his positions.

If there be one thing more than another that militates against the Russian troops in this War, it is the impossibility of direct engagement. The men are always upon the defensive, always opposed to an invisible enemy. A distinguished officer remarked to me one day: "I have been in constant contact with the enemy for two months and a half, fighting fifteen engagements, but I have seen the Japanese on only three occasions."

CHAPTER XXV

IVAN IVANOVITCH

IVAN IVANOVITCH is a big, burly, bovine type of fighting man. He is docile and respectful, long-suffering and slow to anger, simple of faith, and altogether lacking in the arrogance of the professional soldier. He will cook a meal or whitewash his officer's dwelling, nurse the child of his captain's lady or stand long hours outside a restaurant waiting, as willingly as he will shoulder a rifle against an enemy or present arms at a review. The Russian private is never absolutely the soldier. He is the peasant in arms, dogged, loyal, and formidable, caring little for such elegancies of form as make the ornaments of the Green Park and of Greenwich Common.

Ivan Ivanovitch marches to war loaded down with accoutrements, lugging great loaves of black bread and articles of personal adornment.

He marches with the swing of a man accustomed to tramping, chanting his folk songs. He laughs at fatigue, he cares little for extremes of temperature. In winter he wears a heavy frieze overcoat, felten knee-boots, and an astrakhan cap. In summer he kicks off his under-boots of felt and wears the long, soft, Russian leather boot which varies not for cavalry man or infantry soldier. In summer his overcoat and astrakhan busby give place to a cotton blouse and a forage cap. Peasant-like he drinks when vodka is obtainable, but at the Front there is no vodka, and Ivan Ivanovitch lives a cleaner and a healthier life as soldier in camp than ever he does as farmer on the steppes of Siberia.

The Russian soldier rises early, leaves his home of two self-borne canvas flaps at the first grey light of dawn. His prayers said, he hurries to kindle the fire under his samovar and drinks long and deep of the *chahi*, which is his stimulant and his mainstay. Tea and black bread, black bread and tea, form the unvarying breakfast of the Russian private. Along about noon-time, if he is in camp, he trudges to the soup-kitchens, obtains there a

bucket of *borsh*—a soup of boiled beef and vegetables and water.

He drills little at the Front, worries but slightly over ceremony. The salute is his one ceremonial accomplishment. Every one in authority over him he salutes with an assiduity that becomes embarrassing. If an officer passes, he salutes. If an officer addresses him, he stands at the salute until his superior is silent. If he make a report to an officer, he stands at the salute all the time he is in the presence. If on parade, in concert he welcomes his commander in the terms of a son his father. His captain calls him Little Pigeon, and in reply he addresses the officer as Little Father. He skylarks but little and that little clownishly, indulging in wrestling bouts and rustic feats of strength.

With the evening comes the liberty of the Russian soldier. He wanders about the fields, catches grasshoppers and "kaffir gods," listens to their singing. As darkness falls once more the fires are lit under the soup-kitchens, and the while the thick rice-soup in the boilers is cooking, and the samovars are bubbling, the soldiers gather round the leader of the battalion choir and sing strange minor songs of sweet-

heart and wife, and the land they left behind them. It is then Ivan Ivanovitch breaks forth into dancing, does strange Slavonic steps to the accompaniment of his comrades' chanting. That done, he doffs his cap, sings his evening hymn, and concludes with the anthem to the Czar. Half an hour later he is stretched in sleep, all booted and clothed as in the day-time, with his rifle, bayonet at muzzle, by his side.

There is something strangely pathetic in the religious devotion of the Russian private soldier. Night after night I have stood at some lonely siding when a train came in loaded with levies for the war, and I have watched the men, without direction from officer or superior, form up in the waggons, place their icons in a corner, and sing their hymns with a manly conviction that is given to no western nation. At the Front, the finest marquee is the church tent, the home of the pope or regimental chaplain. There Ivan Ivanovitch receives benediction before he trudges into battle. There he seeks consolation in his tribulations. There the last requiem is said over him when a Japanese bullet has found its final billet.

On the march the Russian soldier seeks little

more of comfort than a happening cigarette. His forty or sixty kopecks a month permit of little extravagance. His greatest joy is a gift of papyros—the little unsatisfactory cigarettes of the country.

What days the Manchurian sun is high, and a sluggish Chinese river is at hand, he flocks down in his hundreds to the banks and bathes. The great joy of the Cossack is to bathe along with his horse, to lead it in till the water is lapping about its middle, and then to squat silently down in happy contemplation of his beast's enjoyment.

Much vile libel has been spread about concerning the Russian soldier's treatment of the Chinese in the War area. So far as I have seen—and I have seen most of the country he has traversed—the Russian soldier has behaved towards the Chinese with remarkable restraint and a simple-hearted good fellowship. There has been no commandeering in this War, and marvellously little looting. John Chinaman and Ivan Ivanovitch are friends, with all the advantage of the friendship on the Chinaman's side. In their hours of ease, Muscovite and Manchurian stroll arm-in-arm through the streets of the villages. There is

no brutality on the part of the one, and no distrust on the part of the other. The Chinaman is intellectually the Russian peasant's superior, and he uses his intelligence to curb the muscularity of Ivan the Good Tempered.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE OPERATIONS OF JULY

WITH the defeat of General Baron Stakelberg at Wafangho concentration was forced upon General Kuropatkin. He established his outposts at Kai-chau and withdrew the main body of his forces from the South to Tashichao. General Oku, with the Japanese, advanced very deliberately towards the North. He was waiting to join hands with the Takushan Army which throughout was the strength of the Japanese strategic position.

On July 6 the Japanese commenced the attack upon Kai-chau, and, for four days, fighting was continued on the positions. It was no part of General Kuropatkin's plan to retain possession of this advance post, but the rains of the last days of June had hindered his retirement, so that a rear-guard action was rendered necessary in order to permit of the orderly withdrawal of

troops and stores. Few Russian troops were engaged in the affair. General Sampsonoff, with his Cossacks of the Ussuri, obstructed the Japanese advance, and permitted the evacuation of Kai-chau to be performed in a satisfactory and soldierly manner. By the evening of Saturday, July 9, the Japanese occupied Kai-chau and the hills to the north of the town.

By means of this success the three Japanese armies, that of the South under General Oku, that of Takushan under General Nozu, and that of the East under General Kuroki, were now in touch, and the opportunity was given to the Japanese for that co-ordinated attack which was to culminate in the battle of Liao Yang.

Until the battle of Tashichao, on July 15, only desultory fighting between Sampsonoff's and Mistchenko's cavalry divisions and the Japanese took place in the south.

On July 14 there was an affair on the extreme left of the Russian lines where General Rennenkampf's cavalry, defending the road to Mukden, came into contact with the Japanese. In this affair General Rennenkampf was shot through the thigh, and had to be brought back to Mukden with a badly broken leg.

Since the reconnaissance of July 4 General Count Keller had been constantly receiving reinforcements from Russia. His position had vastly improved, and, on July 17, General Kuropatkin gave him orders to advance upon the enemy's position at Lien-shan-hoang. General Kashtalinski commanded the main attack delivered against the force at Motien-ling at three o'clock on the misty morning of Sunday, July 17.

Although General Kashtalinski was provided with twelve field guns, he found it impossible to make use of them in the country in which he was engaged. He was dependent therefore entirely for his artillery fire upon a single mountain battery which was inferior in range and number of guns to the artillery which the Japanese could bring to bear upon the Russians.

Fighting continued all the morning until about ten o'clock, when General Kashtalinski was forced to commence a retirement which he continued to the old position at Hoi Yan. Here, as elsewhere, the Japanese were slow to take advantage of their success. They had plenty of guns, and had they moved those out in pursuit of the Russians the losses would have been materially greater. The enemy, however, left

their guns in position and trusted entirely to their cavalry and infantry for the pursuit. It has been clearly demonstrated that neither of the combatants is able to take advantage of the opportunities of mountain fighting as would our own Highlanders or Gurkhas. The plainsman of the wide horizon is utterly at fault in fighting through narrow passes, and between high hills.

On the night of July 18, the Russians marched out from Hoi Yan and attacked with the bayonet the Japanese bivouacked against them. The engagement, however, was important only as a reconnaissance.

At dawn, on July 19, an artillery duel commenced between the two forces and was continued until the early afternoon. So far as the Japanese were concerned this served to mask a wide turning movement whereby General Kuroki, making use of secret passes through the hills, was able to bring his forces to bear upon the Russian right. Fighting took place at very close quarters, the Japanese scaling the Russian positions and forcing a withdrawal, about five o'clock in the evening, along the road to An-ping.

The overwhelming weight of General Kuroki's

pressure upon the Russians at An-ping seriously troubled General Kuropatkin. He at once hastened to the scene of action, and took personal command. At the same time he hurried out reinforcements and so strengthened the Russian position that the Japanese retired fifteen miles.

Meanwhile the battle of Tashichao had been fought on July 24. The evening left us secure in our positions at Tashichao. The day's fight had been a heavy one, but the Japanese had failed to effect anything against the Russian guns. It was not until, in the darkness of night, General Oku dared an infantry attack, that General Sarubaeff's troops were shaken from their position and Tashichao was abandoned.

I had fallen asleep at Sin-min-tin, secure in the rear of the Russian forces. At four o'clock on the morning of Monday, July 25, I was waked to find the Japanese close upon the village. The Russians had withdrawn, and, as my Chinese host philosophically remarked when viewing the horse-feed left in the mangers, whence I was hastily removing my ponies: "Chow come with Urgwa ma, chow man-man for Eebenping ma," which, being translated, is, that the food which

had been brought to regale the Russian horse would remain to solace the Japanese cavalry.

General Stakelberg and General Sarubaeff were in full retreat to Haicheng; Newchwang had been evacuated, and the Russian line had been narrowed to the second last rampart of hills upon the east, with Haicheng as the extreme point on the south.

On July 26 a muddy *troika*, drawn by three powerful black horses, preceded by galloping Cossacks and followed by a brilliant staff, dashed through the streets of Liao Yang crowded with transport. In it sat General Kuropatkin, very grey, seeming very aged, sitting low in his carriage and paying heed to none of the salutes offered by the troops huddled at the roadside. He realised the full horror of the grip which the Japanese were tightening about him, and he knew that the day was not far distant when the battle of Liao Yang would be an actuality.

On the morning of Sunday, July 31, General Keller lay on the pass at Yang-tse-ling. The position was one of remarkable strength, and Keller for the first time had in his possession batteries of the newly arrived fifteen-pounder field gun. At seven o'clock in the morning the guns opened firing, and for hours the Russians

poured a storm of shrapnel upon the enemy. The Japanese were endeavouring to move their troops along the hills in the shadows of the crests, but those attacks were promptly met by Count Keller. It was the first action in which the General had commanded a sufficiency of troops for his purpose, the first time he had held a position properly prepared and magnificently situated, the first time in which he had possessed guns superior in range and in quickness of fire to those opposing him. It seemed the dawn of his triumph.

The day was one of terrible heat. Shelter there was none. The hills shimmered in the sunshine. The guns trembled in the batteries. General Keller, all white in his summer tunic, with the Cross of St George upon his breast, moved out to examine the advanced positions. Wherever he went the men quickened to their work, but the little eyes of the Japanese had noted the presence of the commander, and, as he moved, the fire of the enemy followed him. It mattered little to Keller. Death meant nothing to him. Victory would mean much to Russia. Whatever his personal magnetism might do to achieve it must be done, despite the warnings of

officers and the concern of aides-de-camp. He dismounted at a battery and directed the operation of changing its position. The Japanese did not miss the opportunity. They burst a shrapnel straight over the head of the alert figure in white, and Keller fell, with two fragments in his head, three ugly pieces of jagged iron in his chest, and thirty-two shrapnel bullet wounds in other parts of his body.

The loss of Count Keller was the loss of the battle of Yang-tse-ling. The evening fell, and the Russians withdrew. At night the Japanese slept on the positions.

At dawn of that same Sunday of July 31 the Takushan Army attacked General Alexeieff's position at To-mo-shan, ten miles to the south and east of Haicheng. Fighting was fierce all day, and it was not until three o'clock in the afternoon that the Russian right yielded to the Japanese pressure. At five o'clock the main attack was beaten back by the Russians. Here, as at Yang-tse-ling, the Russians possessed strong batteries of quick firers, and their snapping held back the Japanese advance. Night fell with the armies bivouacked against each other. Before morning, to continue General Kuropatkin's idea

of complete concentration, General Alexeieff withdrew his troops and retired upon Haicheng. On August 2, after a series of rear-guard actions, all the Russian forces withdrew from Haicheng northward. On August 3 General Oku occupied the town with his army.

General Kuropatkin, at this date, had considerably increased his forces in Siberia and Manchuria. At Haicheng were the 1st and 4th Siberian Corps, and the fifth division which formed half of the second Siberian Army Corps. In the Army of the East were the 10th and 17th Army Corps. At Yen-tai, to the north of Liao Yang, the first Corps from Europe was in process of disembarkation. Altogether there were five Corps and a half of troops, representing a force of about 205,000 men. With that force General Kuropatkin held the much restricted line which now consisted of the last hills outside of Liao Yang and their sweep southward to the advance position at An-shan-jan.

Although General Kuropatkin's concentration had markedly improved his strategic position, the effect upon the troops had not been wholly satisfactory. To the man in the ranks a strategic retreat invariably appears as a tactical retreat.

THE VICEROY'S GENERAL STAFF AT MUKDEN.

H.E. Admiral Alexeieff.

H.E. THE VICEROY LEAVING MUKDEN FOR VLADIVOSTOK, AUGUST 1ST.

It is impossible to convince him of the contrary, and the troops looked very sullen in those last, hot days of July.

The railway, which throughout the campaign had achieved wonders that never had been expected of it, was now working at its very best. Prince Khilkov, the Minister of Ways and Communications, had laid down across Siberia and down Manchuria to Liao Yang a series of sidings which practically doubled the capacity of the line. The railway now carried eight trains each day, seven military and one composite. In each train were forty cars, and in each car were forty men, or their equivalent in eight horses and sixteen men. As Sir Percy Girouard demonstrated in Egypt and in South Africa, so the Russians proved in Manchuria that the utility of a railway line altogether surpasses the theoretical calculations of critical strategists.

Pending the opening of the Circum-Baikal line all troops were detrained on the western shore of the lake, ferried across and entrained again on the eastern shore. Ammunition and hospitals were carried on the same cars all the way from Petersburg or Moscow or Kiev to their destination in Manchuria, being ferried across the lake on

the ice-breaker "Baikal" in trains of twenty-five waggons placed on three pairs of rails upon the main deck.

July closed with General Kuropatkin better satisfied with his circumstances than at any time since the outbreak of hostilities.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE PLAY OF DEATH

THE full-blooded Manchurian sun rose hot and eager above the mountains of Sioung-yo-Chan on the morning of Sunday, July 24. Men were to die on the plain about Tashichao, and he desired to see the conflict.

Silently, into the fields, plodded the Chinese peasantry. Their interests were not the interests of the men on the mountains, of the soldiers behind the guns in the valley. Their purpose was to preserve life, not to destroy it. Russian and Japanese might slay and be slain; the Chinaman must grow the grain to fill the little bodies in the mud-walled hovel he called his home. So, plough on shoulder, hoe in hand, he trudged stolidly, in the early half-light, out into the millet-fields, recking nothing, thinking nothing, of the tragedy about to be enacted in his midst.

The theatre of battle had been admirably chosen, magnificently set. Stretching to right and left, and out into the wide sweep of the plain, was a carpet of cool and glossy kiaolang, the lance-stalked grain of the country. From it rose two tawny-sided hillocks, the scarred and riven outposts of the purple range of mountains to the left. On the right, and outward to the front, it gently, lazily, rolled itself westward into the blazing blue of the Gulf of Liao-tung. Save for the Chinese farmers on the footpaths, the whole expanse was empty, silent, reposeful, wrapped in the peace of a perfect Sabbath morn.

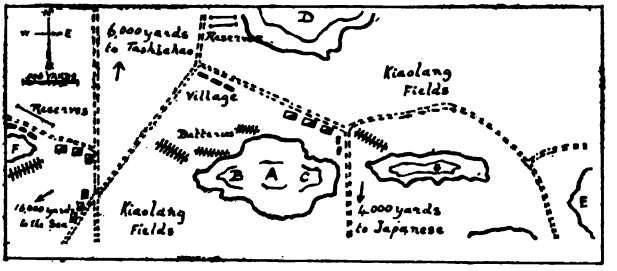
At half-past five, suddenly out of the silence, the first gun screamed *reveille.*

Then, out from the shadow of the valley, black guns poked their snouts, soldiers hurried about their business, Cossack orderlies clattered to quarters, officers rose like warders upon the parapet of the hills. The Play of Death had begun, and the overture thundered mightily!

In the positions in the valley, and in the isolated kopje on the right, were the men of General Baron Stakelberg's First Army Corps, 25,000 soldiers wakened to combat. In the

spurs of the hills on the eastward were the 25,000 of General Sarubaeff, the men of the Fourth Army Corps. The Play of Death did not lack players—50,000 men, with an orchestra of 112 guns!

Five thousand yards away, in the hills to the southward, was the Japanese army of Oku, ensconced in the mystery of their recesses. Its



SKETCH PLAN OF THE RUSSIAN POSITION.

A = The General and Staff.
B, C = Entrenched Infantry Positions.
D = Position of Artillery Brigadier.
E = Position of General Sarubaeff's Corps.
F = Right Flank of Russian Force.
G = Hillock unoccupied by Troops.

batteries boomed a bold antiphony to the chorus of our guns. The mountains shook with the thunder of the cannonade.

The spurs of the mountains on the left were occupied by the men of General Sarubaeff's corps. Against them the enemy first directed his fire. Across the plain the shells came,

shrieking and thirsty for blood. Above the hill they poised for an instant, silent and smoke-shrouded, then swooped to the earth and rent it. The soldiers cowered and crouched. The ground was destitute of cover, sun-baked and time-hardened. The flock of shells increased in number, hailed shrapnel upon the mound as a thunderstorm in summer. The earth sprang back in protest. The hill was lost to view.

The flight of shells ceased. The gaunt and grizzled hill emerged from the dust-storm. It was wrinkled and twisted as a tortured thing. The sun beat down upon its blistered sides. They were nude and horribly uncovered. The army had vanished. There had been fifteen minutes of bombardment. Those fifteen minutes had spelled eternity for scores who ate their morning meal there. The Play of Death had produced its first sensation.

Over on the highest knoll of the central kopje General Stakelberg stood unmoved and immovable. Dressed all in white, cool and collected, he directed the affairs of the fight as a chess-player the pieces. He seemed something out of place in the hideous inferno. Below, our guns barked devilishly. The Japanese sought to dis-

concert our right, blazed mightily at a lonely kopje there. Growing wearied, they concentrated on the centre, smothered the position in dust and broken stone. Above, the sun glowed mercilessly. The Play of Death was interesting now, and he permitted not a cloud to veil the spectacle from his sight. Men, overcome with the heat, fell dead from sunstroke. The horrid chant of the guns augmented in malignancy. The shells searched the ground behind the kopjes.

An aide, as perfect as his General, well-groomed, and graceful in the saddle, rode rapidly down the flank of the principal position, cantered across the zone of fire in the valley, pulled pantingly up the slope to the General of Artillery. At what was His Excellency directing his fire? The Brigadier indicated the position. The aide saluted, galloped down and back across the field where the kiaolang crop was being reaped with shell-fire.

The enemy found the mud-huts in the Chinese village, gnawed at them viciously. Out from the houses swarmed the peasants, old men and children, women with babes at their breasts, the dogs, and the squealing swine. The farmers

seated themselves in a row, impassive, awe-struck. House after house crumbled to its constituent rubble. The men sat as statues—a row of Buddhist images contemplating ruin. The Play of Death demanded change of scene.

It was five o'clock of the evening. The sun was hastening on its mission westward. The sea glowed as a burnished buckler. The fields of the morning were bedraggled straw litter. The dust of battle hung low over the landscape. The enemy slacked his fire. The Brigadier of Artillery anxiously scanned the horizon. Experience had taught the danger in these silences of the enemy.

Half an hour passed, and then the crash of guns re-opened from the west. The Japanese had shifted their position. They were reaching the batteries through the wide strath on the right, having found our true location thus late in the day. Our General of Artillery's arm was shattered by a shrapnel. Evening fell, and twilight.

Now, for the first time, one could learn the position of the Japanese. Red tongues of fire licked their way through the gathering gloom. Wicked snakes' shapes of flame darted across

the distant blackness. The Play of Death was closing in a pyrotechnic display.

Night fell, and with it stillness. Away to the left the rattle of infantry fire grew more insistent as the big guns lapsed to silence. The lights of Red Cross parties, and of weary gunners watering horses, flecked the darkness. The Play of Death had ended its performance.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE MODERN SKOBELEFF

GENERAL COUNT KELLER is dead. The knowledge comes to me as the news of the death of a friend. I had been the only correspondent accredited to his corps, had campaigned with him, had seen him with his staff, his officers, and his men. I had heard his praises sung by orderly and by *aide-de-camp*, by thirty-six-year-old comrade, and by newly-joined subaltern. I had learned to know him as one knows only the clean-hearted and the sympathetic. I had respected him for his bravery in battle, his intelligence in leadership, his constant consideration for others, his energy, and his resource.

It was very early in June when Middleton and I first rode into the quarters of Count Keller on the road to Feng-hoang-cheng. His camp was a reflex of the man. Everything was soldier-like and orderly. The guns were neatly parked.

The infantry was comfortably quartered on well-drained slopes. The horse lines were well arranged and free from litter. The soup-kitchens stood aligned like a guard of honour paraded for inspection. The General's personal quarters were properly trenched and shaded. The whole camp bore the stamp of discipline and supervision.

The General himself sat in his tent writing. He received us with the stately courtesy of an old-time French seigneur. It was not till later that I learned the despatches he was composing announced the beginning of Kuroki's phenomenal advance upon the left of the Russian line. No trace of the urgency of the messages was apparent in his manner. He made us welcome to his camp.

That evening I saw Count Keller at dinner. Surrounded by a brilliant staff, principally of officers of the Guards, he chatted gaily with every one, searching the faces of his company with the keenness of one who had lived with his hand ever close to the sword-hilt.

Immaculately uniformed, bearing the Cross of St George upon the breast of his pure white tunic, exacting the formalities of etiquette from

those about him, he had no smallest suggestion of the exquisite. Sun-burned and wind-tanned, with his well-groomed beard strangely splashed with white, he looked a soldier who loved service and had seen much. I was to know later how true this was.

Three days after our arrival Keller and his men marched away to meet the Japanese at Lien-chan-kouan. I carried Middleton back to the hospital where he died.

The next time I saw Count Keller was at Lanjansan, a fortnight later. I joined him in his retreat before the overwhelming army of Kuroki. It was a day of dreadful rain. The roads were belly-deep in mire. The horses lagged distressfully. Men were washed away and drowned where, a week before, had been good marching road beds. The transports stuck in the ruts and were abandoned. The rain swept down unceasingly. The troops laboured mightily. Keller was in command, and the fact carried them where neither mule nor baggage horse could force a passage.

The General himself, on an awkward-gaited Cossack horse, rode forward to investigate the positions, swung round to Hazaling, thirty-five

versts away to the southward, gathered up some troops there, returned to Lanjansan, and led his bedraggled forces back to the Pass of Yang-tse-ling in time to check the Japanese advance. Count Keller was fifty-five years of age, but he covered seventy-five miles that weary day in the saddle upon a common troop horse he had not ridden before.

In the weeks that followed I saw much of Count Keller, sat beside him while he drew plans of battle with a kiaolang stalk in the mud, rode near him on the march, admired his cheerful calmness in battle. I had excellent opportunity to mark his influence upon his men, to appreciate his value as a leader of a skeleton army against overwhelming odds. He had become guardian of the gate of Liao Yang, and right loyally he held the post.

It was after the affair of July 4, when his men had marched twelve miles to fight, had stormed the heights of Ta-go-ling in darkness, had been overtaken by daylight and suffered terribly in consequence, that I heard Count Keller beg the survivors to carry the wounded the twelve miles back to quarters to save them the jolting of the Red Cross carts. For love of

him, as much as out of consideration for their comrades, the battle-weary soldiers shouldered the litters back down the long road to the river, haltingly over the swollen fords, heavily up the bouldered path to the position on the summit. The influence of Keller had overcome their fatigue.

The career of General Count Keller is quickly told. In 1868 he was a page of His Imperial Majesty the Czar. From the Page School he passed into the Chevalier Guards, and afterwards went to the Military Academy, whence he returned as Adjutant to the Horse Guards, later commanding a squadron.

In the Turko-Servian War he volunteered for service with the Servians, and commanded a wing there with distinction. Later he served in the Russo-Turkish War and in the Asiatic Expedition. In these campaigns he won the coveted sword of honour — the *sabre d'or* — for conspicuous bravery in the field, and the St George's Cross, the proudest decoration a Russian officer may carry. From active service Count Keller returned as a member of the Cossack Central Staff, and became A.D.C. to the Czar. He commanded a battalion of the

Tireurs of the Guard—the Imperial Foot Guards —and at the special request of the Czar undertook the direction of the Page School. In 1894 he was appointed Governor of Ekaterinoslaf. From there, a Lieutenant-General, pupil of, and A.D.C. to Skobeleff, trusted friend of Kuropatkin, he was called to succeed General Sassulitch in command of the Army of the East in the present war after the affair of Chiu-lieng-cheng. General Kuropatkin presented him to the troops as the soldier likest Skobeleff in all the Russian army.

At the time of his death Count Keller held the most important corps command in the Manchurian army. His column numbered some fifty thousand men.

A strict disciplinarian, General Keller demanded efficiency in every grade beneath him. To secure it he made many changes in the regiments of his force, replaced many of the commanders. At his death he commanded an army effective in every branch, ever ready for combat or fatigue, devoted to its leader. His loss cannot be measured in words.

Count Keller died as he would have chosen to die—in fair fight, with his face to the foe

shattered by the enemy's shrapnel. In his body were thirty-seven wounds. To me there is something of association in the knowledge that he fell within sight of poor Middleton's grave. The General's last words to me on the loss of my comrade might form an epitaph over his own tomb: "It was not his time to die."

THE DONKEY TRAIN.

STUCK IN THE MUD.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE TARTAR GENERAL

THE most interesting figure of the campaign in the East was neither Russian nor Japanese, but a Chinaman, the Chung Choong, or Chinese Viceroy, of Manchuria. To afford him a spectacle, to impress him with the might and potency of civilised arms, General Kuropatkin halted his troops at Mukden. To earn his approbation and the approval of Peking, the Japanese pushed on their advance north of their natural frontier at Liao Yang. In the hands of this man—the Viceroy of Manchuria, the Tartar General of Mukden, the Keeper of the Imperial Tombs, the Guardian of the Sacred Palace—lies the key to the political situation in Manchuria. Fifteen million Chinese wait the indication of his pleasure. The safety of the long lines of Japanese communications from Dalny to Liao Yang, from the Yalu to the Taitse-ho, and of

the longer lines of Russian communications from Mukden to Manchuria, lies at his disposition.

Quiet of manner and gentle of voice, it is difficult to realise that the Tartar General of Mukden condemns to death each year in his yamen a thousand of his subjects. Each afternoon of my five months' stay in the province of Mukden two or three, sometimes five or six, bedraggled Chinamen were decapitated in the barren Potter's Field beyond the Little West Gate of the capital. In the outer courts of his yamen I have seen such exhibitions of torture, such bastinadoings and slipperings, such racking of joints and twisting of muscles, as turn my heart sick at the recollection.

Yet is the Viceroy himself essentially a mild-mannered man, a man of letters and a patron of the fine arts. The first time I was received by him was an occasion of much ceremony. I was ushered in between long lines of mandarins, through the central doors that open only for those whom His Excellency deigns to honour. That morning he had refused an audience to His Excellency the Viceroy Alexeieff on the plea of ill-health, and the honour done myself was designed to emphasise the significance of the excuse.

The Chung Choong, robed in the Imperial yellow of his office, alone seated himself with me at the table in his reception pavilion. Pig-tailed retainers served sweet champagne and cakes, fruit and the customary tea.

We talked much of the situation and the troubles of his people. I asked how long he had ruled in Manchuria. His answer was brief but significant: "Six unhappy years."

In those years his province has been devastated by three wars, his capital has been sacked by the mob and occupied by the Russians, his power has been filched from him, his life has been demanded as the price of his part in the Boxer rising, his royal state has been exchanged for the condition of a prisoner. He has contemplated suicide.

His suicide undoubtedly would have been effected, had it not been for an access of filial piety. His mother is still alive, an aged lady of some eighty years. To his Chinese mind it would have been an unworthy thing to leave this world before the mother who bore him. So he lived.

Besides, he had no son to do his memory fitting honour, to worship at his grave. As

Mencius has said: "There are three things which are unfilial, and to have no posterity is the greatest of these." The Chung Choong could not depart this life with so great a sin upon his conscience. Accordingly, some weeks before my arrival in Mukden, he put away his barren wife and adopted a more hopeful helpmate. When last I was received by him, on August 16, I asked after the health of this lady. The Viceroy's face beamed with gladness: "Three weeks ago she bore me a son."

Most severely has the presence of the Viceroy strained the tact of the Russians in Mukden. His yamen has been a privileged centre of espionage. He himself has taken a delight in refusing buildings for hospitals, in placing obstacles in the path of his most unwelcome guests, in propounding nasty political problems for solution. Whichever combatant holds Mukden bears the responsibility for all the indignities thrust upon the Chinese by the exigencies of the military situation. The Chung Choong cannot wield full power in a province occupied by the troops of another nation; and yet whoever removes that power from him incurs the danger of the enmity of China. The

Russians have dealt wisely with the problem, have respected the sanctity of the Imperial tombs, have preserved from harm the treasures of the Sacred Palace. Their task has been no light one, has been performed with considerable success.

To the victors in the war will be the spoils of a most heavy responsibility, a responsibility which the Chung Choong does nothing to lighten.

CHAPTER XXX

THE CULMINATING BATTLE

THE beginning of August found the contending strategies active upon the plains about Liao Yang. General Kuropatkin had almost completed his concentration. He had received his complement of reinforcements. He had his line of retreat prepared and guarded. The Japanese had succeeded in combining their three armies into a chain that sought to wind itself about General Kuropatkin and to enclose him within the positions around the city which he had made his military stronghold in Manchuria.

On August 4 the rain began at Liao Yang, and the days that followed were the most awful experienced by the troops in Manchuria since the outbreak of hostilities. The rains were followed by a heat which brought the temperature to 120° Fahrenheit. This heat, coming after the rains, when all the country was full of

water, imposed sufferings upon the troops in the open which are beyond the power of language to describe.

On August 6 Viceroy Alexeieff came to Liao Yang to consult with General Kuropatkin. The result of that consultation was to confirm His Excellency in the wisdom and practicability of the plans of the Commander-in-Chief. He returned to Mukden declaring that General Kuropatkin's scheme and his own ideas were thoroughly in accord.

Rain and heat brought operations to a standstill, and for weeks no movement took place on the part of either force.

In those days the kiaolang shot up to a height of twelve or thirteen feet. This result had been foreseen by the Japanese, dimly realised by the Russians. The Japanese knew that by the existence of those new plantations of high and well-feathered vegetation, cavalry operations would be rendered impossible in the plains of the Liao Valley. They also knew that those crops would afford magnificent cover for infantry attack against strong defensive positions. The Russians, on the other hand, had prepared their fortresses, their entrenchments and their

gun emplacements at a time when the level of the surrounding country was twelve feet lower than it was in the middle weeks of August. The significance of this should be at once apparent. Positions thoroughly prepared for defence had become practically useless, and the whole condition of the battle-ground was changed by three weeks of lashing rain and torrid heat.

On August 12 I was startled by distant sounds of deep-throated cheering. I rode into town to learn what victory had given occasion for the jubilation. Everywhere were flags and signs of great rejoicing. The soldiers' faces were radiant, and the hardships of the campaign were forgotten in a general joy. I quickly learned that that day a son had been born to the Czar, a Czarevitch given to the people. To the men in the field it was the symbol of a change in the fortunes of War. To them the little Prince Imperial was a sign from Heaven, a proof that their efforts had Divine sanction. It was in a spirit of greater confidence that the Russians waited the armies of Oku, and Nozu, and Kuroki, than at any time since the troops first faced each other on the banks of the Yalu.

The Russian front now extended from An-shan-jan, along the innermost line of hills, to An-ping and the Tai-tse-ho. On August 23 the Japanese drove in our outposts on the East. On August 26 the whole of the Army of the East, under the command of Lieutenant-General Ivanoff, was engaged at three points by Kuroki's troops. The Japanese, taking every advantage of the jungle of kiaolang, moved both guns and infantry into the fields, whence they dropped a vicious hail of shrapnel upon the trenches commanding the last passes outside of Liao Yang.

Hot, muggy weather gave place to a terrible thunderstorm on the afternoon of August 26, and roads and trenches became flooded swamps. After the rain the night cleared, and under a full moon the men were able severely to punish the enemy attacking us. Not only so, but they indulged in counter-attacks during the night.

On the morning of August 28 the Japanese occupied the right bank of the swiftly-flowing Tang-ho, the principal affluent to the Tai-tse-ho. That evening they had crossed, and lay ready to co-operate with the armies of Nozu and Oku,

in an attack upon the fortress of Liao Yang itself.

In the south our outposts were attacked by Oku's army on August 26, and, after a sharp little affair, retired to a position on the saddle mountain of An-shan-jan. This position was one upon which much hard work was expended in the earliest weeks of the campaign. The works had been added to and improved, but the position was no longer the frontier fortress to Liao Yang which, in the event of General Kuropatkin continuing to hold the hills to the East, it would have been. It had become little more than an isolated position, and General Stakelberg was ordered to withdraw from it upon Liao Yang so soon as Oku's attack should fully have been developed.

By noon on August 27 the Russians had withdrawn from An-shan-jan. Rains came to hinder the retirement, and, although twenty-four horses were hitched to each of the guns of the rear-guard, it was found impossible to extricate them from the mire. The pieces sank until they disappeared from sight, and horses and men were only saved by sheer haulage from suffocation in the mud.

THE CULMINATING BATTLE

Early on the morning of August 30, from the cover of the kiaolang mantling the plain, the enemy opened a fire upon our southernmost positions. As the day advanced, the smoke of the Japanese guns hung like a cowl over the crops that masked their positions. Into that smoke-cloud we drove our shrapnel, and casualties must have been heavy in the millet fields down in the flats. With nightfall the rain came, and the Japanese attempt at an attack in force failed because of the state of the roads which, for the first time, befriended the Russians.

On the early morning of August 31, the Japanese threw away life in the attempt to carry the highlands. Battalions of Japanese died on the slopes of the hills held by General Stakelberg. No European troops would have stood the punishment to which the regiments of Oku were subjected. They fought as the Dervishes at Omdurman, with more of science indeed, but with the same fanatical fatalism which distinguished the Fuzzy Wuzzy of the Soudan.

During the night of August 31, General Baron Stakelberg withdrew his headquarters to

Liao Yang, as did General Ivanoff. General Mistchenko moved round the town on the west and occupied ground to the north and east whence he might retrieve the position lost by General Orloff, restrain Kuroki's attack, and leave General Kuropatkin's line of retreat open. General Grekov was left to fight a rear-guard action which he maintained throughout September 1.

The defence of those grand old soldiers enabled General Kuropatkin to withdraw his troops and guns, most of his stores, and to destroy whatever could not be carried away, prior to the Japanese entry into Liao Yang. The Japanese who had aimed at cutting off the Russian retreat to the north, of enveloping them in the mud about the Tai-tse-ho, found themselves in possession of a town peopled by Chinese and Cossack stragglers. Those last suffered terribly at the hands of the yellow men. Not one escaped.

Although hundreds of Russians were trapped in the town and in the trenches, the Japanese took only thirteen prisoners, of whom six were captured in the significant presence of the foreign correspondents and military attachés.

The Japanese themselves returned their losses at Liao Yang as 17,539. Competent foreign critics accompanying their forces, however, estimate the total casualties as little short of 50,000. It has to be remembered in connection with this battle, as with all engagements in Manchuria, that the Japanese, fighting with a force of a limited ultimate capacity, dared not acknowledge the full extent of the losses they sustained at the hands of the Russians who possessed a comparatively unlimited ultimate capacity.

The same barbarism which enabled the yellow men to carry the trenches after five days' fighting accounted for the looting of Liao Yang, the absence of quarter, and the brutal assault upon the kindly Scots missionary, Dr Westwater.

While the armies of Oku and Nozu had hammered fruitlessly at the last defences of Liao Yang, General Kuroki had endeavoured to force Kuropatkin's left rear and so to obtain the mastery of the railway line and the way of retreat to Mukden. General Orloff, who lay at Yen-tai with more than an army corps of men, broke before the attack and lost General Kuropatkin his entire tactical advantage.

Had General Kuropatkin's left held firm, his front and right would never have yielded to the Japanese, but, from the beginning of the campaign, General Kuropatkin's desire had been to avoid, so far as possible, serious losses of men in battles where the territorial advantage of resistance was but insignificant.

When his left gave way it was necessary for him to withdraw troops to secure his line of retreat. This he did with marvellous success, and, without the loss of a gun or a pud of valuable stores, he brought back his army to Mukden.

When the Japanese occupied Liao Yang they realised that they had fought a campaign, had lost scores of thousands of soldiers, but had gained nothing more material than a moral victory. At the best Liao Yang could never have been a Sedan. It could only have been the scene of the defeat of General Kuropatkin's army. As it was, General Kuropatkin lay at Mukden prepared to accept battle, actually willing to invite it.

September 15 found the Commander-in-Chief at Mukden with an army in numbers and in discipline superior to that he previously had

commanded in Manchuria. His force in the middle week of September was:

1st Army Corps	16,000
4th Army Corps	32,000
2nd Siberian Corps	16,000
5th Siberian Corps	32,000
10th Russian Army Corps	40,000
17th Army Corps	40,000
1st Army Corps	40,000
6th Siberian Army Corps	32,000
Caucasian Cossacks	10,000
	258,000

The sufferings of the troops in those days of August and early September cannot be exaggerated. They were the natural consequence of the malignancy of the fight and the circumstances of the moment. Much has been written of the failure of the Red Cross to cope with the sufferings of the wounded. No hospital service can cope with sixty thousand sufferers suddenly thrust upon it. Men at the Front who never before have seen anything more serious than a cut finger, write awful accounts of the torture of the wounded in battle. That torture is an incident of warfare, and must be allowed for when statesmen decide to break off diplomatic relations. In the Spanish-American war in the Soudan, in South Africa, in Manchuria

much has been written of the shortcomings of the hospital corps, and yet, in that service of mercy, are to be found the real heroes and heroines of battle. Non-combatants, their danger is as great as that of the most brutal soldier in the ranks.

When a man is shot through both knees in a kiaolang field, twelve miles from aid, he cannot fail to suffer awful pain in the endeavour to reach assistance, but the responsibility for that pain rests, not with the medical man who seeks to cure it, but with the statesman who failed to prevent it. The Red Cross in Manchuria has done as noble work as any I have seen performed by hospital corps in other quarters of the globe. Much has been alleged against the management of the Russian Red Cross. With respect to it, I fall back upon my own experience. When little Middleton had died in Count Apraksin's hospital at Lanjansan I took over his effects. Among them were receipts for all the property possessed by him at the time of his decease. These included a receipt for the sum of money upon his person. I had sought to make myself responsible for the expenses of attention and interment, but had been refused. When I came to take over his

THE SIGNAL MOUNTAIN OF THE TSIEN-CHAN.

THE HELIOGRAPH STATION ON THE SUMMIT.

effects I found that Middleton had withdrawn from the moneys in the keeping of the authorities various sums. When I came to count the balance I found ten dollars short. I knew Middleton in some manner or other had drawn the money, but no argument of mine would suffice to convince the Head of the hospital. He forced me to accept the ten dollars of difference from his private purse, lest it might be possible to accuse the service of misappropriation.

This was not merely an isolated instance of rectitude for the benefit of foreign critics. I tested the probity of the hospital officials on many occasions, and not once did I find the men actually at the Front responsible for misappropriation. The ghouls in war are rarely found on the battlefield. They live in the great cities where contracts are to be obtained, where vast funds are to be administered, whence stores are to be despatched. For them I enter no plea. My championship is for those actually at the fighting Front, for the doctors and the Sisters of Charity, whose labours have achieved much in an area of horrible, unavoidable suffering.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE LEADERS IN THE WAR

THE real leader in Russia is His Imperial Majesty the Czar. To him all reports are made; personally he supervises all great matters of policy, all plans of campaign. Each Minister and each General is but the instrument of his pleasure. He is the soul of the army, the inspiration of the leaders in the War.

General Kuropatkin, himself absolutely a soldier, commands the respect of all soldiers. He works strenuously and unceasingly. Up and at his desk in the working-saloon of his railway-car at seven o'clock in the morning he toils without pause, save thirty minutes for lunch and three-quarters of an hour for dinner, until eleven or twelve o'clock at night.

An abstemious man, he drinks little, smokes scarcely at all. His whole mind is wrapped up in the affairs of the campaign. He neglects

nothing. Never has the burden of a war rested so completely on one pair of shoulders. In Japan the work is carefully apportioned, neatly divided, among the various departments of a wonderfully perfect organisation. In Russia one man carries all the responsibility, personally supervises all the details. General Kuropatkin is not only the brain of the Russian army, he is the executive arm as well. Insignificant matters of commissariat and transport, of hospital and intelligence, are referred to him, as are the great questions of strategy. Not content with leading an army of fighting men, he has worked hard to secure soldierly soldiers. The morale of his troops has steadily improved with time. Like all great Generals he commands the absolute devotion of his men, and his presence in the field adds incalculably to the fighting efficiency of any force.

General Count Keller, who commanded the Army of the East until his death, was a soldier who gripped the imagination of his men. Brave to a fault he met his death in a position where the senior in command should not have exposed himself. Like Kuropatkin a friend and comrade of Skobeleff, he maintained the tradition of that

magnetic fighting man among the troops. His loss cost Russia much, and to me he must ever be my Hero of the War.

General Baron Stakelberg, commanding the 1st Siberian Army Corps, is an officer who underwent much criticism because of the ill-fate of his affair at Wafangho. Most of that criticism he has lived down, much of it was unfair. Accused of living a life of luxury out of keeping with his duties in the field, I found General Stakelberg a man of simple tastes, eating the food of the common soldier, sleeping where opportunity gave him quarters. His gravest crime was that he was always clean in person, well-groomed in appearance, and unmistakably a gentleman.

General Sarubaeff, commanding the 4th Siberian Army Corps, is an officer well loved, and eagerly obeyed by his troops. A reliable officer, he has opposed a stout shoulder to the Japanese advance since ever he assumed the command.

General Ivanoff, who succeeded General Count Keller in command of the Army of the East, is a strategist of the first rank in the Russian army. He represents a very different school from that of his predecessor. He belongs to

the company of the Thinkers, and his dispositions in the field have been of the most successful in the history of the campaign.

General Rennenkampf is the General French of the Russian army. Like all officers who give their men a sufficiency of fighting, he is adored in the Cossack division he commands. A dashing cavalry officer, reckless of danger, he has been twice severely wounded in the course of the War. He loves battle, and, wherever he is, his men may depend upon constant employment. Commanding a cavalry division requiring steady heads and quick hands, he withholds all liquor from his officers and his men.

General Mistchenko has increased a distinguished reputation in the War. Indefatigable and brave, he has been one of the hardest worked Generals in the army of the Czar.

General Grekov is a cavalry soldier of the old stamp. He was out-generaled by the Japanese at Tsaumatse and in consequence lost his Division. When, however, it came to a matter of fighting, General Kuropatkin gave to the old Cossack officer the command of the rear-guard while he withdrew his forces from Liao Yang. The stubbornness of his resistance spoke well

for the soldierly qualities of Grekov and for the ability of Kuropatkin to judge the character of the men about him.

General Kashtalinski is the General of infantry who has added most to his reputation in the campaign. Dogged and determined, time and again he has held positions upon which the fate of the army depended against overwhelming odds. Wounded at Chiu-lien-cheng, he has shared with the meanest of his troops the dangers and the difficulties of the War.

General Contretovitch, who commanded the division quartered at Tashichao at the beginning of the campaign, is an officer of a remarkably sympathetic nature. His work has been well done and neatly done. His sphere of operations including, as it did, the Treaty Port of Newchwang brought him into contact with the representatives of many neutral nations. His diplomacy in dealing with questions of critical intensity was no less remarkable than the courage which distinguished him in the field.

General Orloff, disgraced after the battle of Liao Yang, merely developed a reputation he previously had earned.

General Sassulitch, upon whom lies the burden

of responsibility for the heavy losses sustained by the Russians in the battle at the crossing of the Yalu, is one of the old type of Russian officer. He failed to march with the times, and he suffered in consequence. He is the General Buller of the army.

CHAPTER XXXII

BARBARISM IN BATTLE

THE Japanese success in the War has been due to the scientific intelligence of the leaders, and the barbaric intensity of the fighting men. Much is written of the civilisation of the Japanese nation, and their excellence in battle is attributed to that. As a matter of fact their superiority to Western troops is due to the effective barbarism of the soldier in the ranks as much as to the scientific direction of the men in the War Office at Tokio.

War as a political argument is futile. It is the most ancient, the most crude, the most barbaric means of settling a dispute known to man, and the most barbaric nations are the most capable of utilising it to their ends. We, in the West, have allowed sentiment to obtrude into the

prosecution of war. War has been refined to an affectation. In the old days when war still claimed some effect as a political argument, it gained its efficiency from the stern rigour with which it was pursued. Since then it had degenerated to the level of a game, it had become hedged about with rules, and the combatant who infringed those was tabooed as he would be on the polo-ground or on the football field.

I had seen something of war prior to the conflict between Russia and Japan, and the only war that could be said to have accomplished anything was Lord Kitchener's conclusive campaign in the Soudan. The war between Spain and the United States was a war waged more fiercely in the privacy of the Cabinet in Madrid than on the sides of San Juan Hill or in the waters of Santiago Harbour.

As I accompanied Osman Digna, the last of the Khalifa's Emirs, the last of the slave-traders, back from the hills to a life of captivity, I realised that war had at last done something peace could never have attained. It was real war. There were no white flags, no cunning armistices, no courteous exchanges of medicines and messages

of condolence, no squeamish abstinence from the destruction of the enemy's property, no long line of prisoners to bring a blush to the cheeks of the third and the fourth generation. I hate war, but I realise that the modern affectation of minimising the horrors and confining the licence within the limitations of conventions is an incentive to its continuance rather than a practical argument for its abolition.

I had the misfortune to be within call of the Matopos when, in 1896, Cecil Rhodes arranged his peace with the Matabele. I have since seen something of three ugly native wars that his ill-judged humanity then made possible.

War to effect anything must be real, must be earnest. The Boer War, despite all the early epileptic shrieking over the use of the white flag, over the prevalence of treachery, was waged more in consonance with the rules of the game than any of which history takes cognisance. It was war marked by the stately courtesies of the jousting field. Boer vied with Briton in the endeavour to preserve the etiquette of legalised murder.

It has been the mode to urge æsthetic warfare, and our campaigns have dragged on into

the third and fourth year, lazily, pensively, but always mannerly, costing a score of lives here, a hundred corpses there—the most savage passions of men schooled to the courteous measure of a seventeenth century minuet! The poor Boers danced but blunderingly indeed, and occasionally spoiled a figure by their ill-bred display of a white flag or by their rustic eagerness to uproot a railway line, but for the most part they cut a passable figure, and the soldiers in khaki had less to say against them than had any single printed thing in Fleet Street. At times they showed a disconcerting aptitude for their particular type of warfare, and there were Boers who, from constantly oscillating between farming and fighting, had to glance at the implements on their shoulders before they named their occupation for the day.

The war waged by Japan and Russia has been real war, has been a revolution from the system which had been in vogue for more than half a century. The white flag has not been seen on the plains of Manchuria. Quarter, in the ordinary sense of the term, has neither been sought nor given. Liao Yang was one of the bloodiest battles in history. It ended

with vast numbers of stragglers from the retreating army pent up within the city—the number of prisoners taken by the Japanese was officially returned at thirteen.

For long the Russians seemed not to realise the gravity of the enterprise upon which they were engaged. They fought bravely enough in battle, but were singularly lacking in their hatred of the enemy. It required the awful carnage of Liao Yang and Sha-ho to impress them with the actuality of battle. In the end they fought as savagely as ever did troops in harness. The list of casualties on both sides is awful to contemplate. The total number of prisoners is utterly insignificant. As a result, the glorious plenitude of peace will be more sincerely prized by both combatants, the efficacy of war as a political argument will be brought more in accord with its horror and its costliness. It had become a blunted tool, operating more effectually against the artisan than against the material he desired to fashion to his pleasure. The more savage is war the more blessed will be the presence of peace to mankind. In the savagery, primarily of the Japanese, and, afterwards of both combatants, is a more effective argument for peace

than has been propagated by all the Peace Societies of the world.

The Japanese, as fighting men, are without their equals in the world. They have the fanatical patriotism of the Zulu or the Dervish directed in a scientific manner by men trained in the strategy of all the schools. Such a fighting force has but to be met to be respected.

The Russians possessed magnificent fighting material — great strong sons of the soil who wasted no time in asking questions, who troubled not about comment or criticism, but who lacked the fierce fanaticism and the scientific direction which made their enemy irresistible. When war broke out the chief commands were in the hands of Generals of a departed generation. Many of them were ignorant of the use of such ordinary instruments of modern warfare as wireless telegraphy, and heliography, and flash-light signalling. I have known Generals refuse permission for the erection of a heliograph apparatus on the ground that it was a mere toy. Such men preferred the old-time despatch riders, and used them for the conveyance of messages whose value depended upon the celerity of their communication. Modern men, as were

Kuropatkin and Keller, Ivanoff and Putiloff, welcomed every device of science, and their various appointments made vast change in the effectiveness of the Russian troops in the War.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE HERO OF SHA-HO

FIVE years ago I journeyed to Lourenço Marques, in Portuguese East Africa, in company with the Russian contingent of volunteers proceeding to join the army of the Boers.[1] Of all the foreign contingents in the Transvaal the Russian was the most serious, the most scientific, the best equipped. It cared little for the justification of the Boer, but it cared much for the experience to be gained of actual warfare, and that in battle against the British. With it were men of position in the army of the Czar. There were Colonel Gourko, son of the famous marshal, military attaché, representing the Russian General Staff with the forces of the South African Republic; Gonetzky, the administrative Chief of the fighting

[1] The author, with the knowledge and sanction of the British War Office, and with a safe-conduct from the Boer Government, accompanied the Boer forces in the field as the correspondent of a London journal.

detachment; Colonel Maximoff, and Captain Putiloff.

The last officer was acting on behalf of the Russian Intelligence Department. The little group of volunteers has had much to do with the development of affairs in the Russo-Japanese War. Colonel Gourko was Chief of Staff to General Baron Stakelberg at the battle of Wafangho, and made his dispositions there after the manner of the Boers at Magersfontein. Since then the Russian artillery has for the most part been placed in such positions as were made familiar to all British soldiers in South Africa. Captain Putiloff, as I knew him five years ago, was a quiet man, intensely interested in his profession, remarkably observant, eager to learn all that the lessons of the War might teach him of his business. He has been associated with the Russian Intelligence Department throughout the present War. At the beginning of the War he ranked as colonel upon the General Staff, and was one of the quickest and most intelligent officers in the Russian army. For long he was quartered in Harbin, until General Kuropatkin, requiring his services, called him south.

A very young colonel, he represents the very

THE CHINESE VICEROY OF MANCHURIA.

THE MANDARINS OF THE VICEROY'S COURT.

best type of Russian officer. Well educated, widely travelled, he is cosmopolitan in opinion and in sympathy. Quiet of manner, quick to decide, prompt to act, brave to a fault, he has astonished the world by his success in the field of battle.

With the loss of active officers, General Kuropatkin has withdrawn efficient men from staff work to place them in actual command in the field. In this manner Colonel Putiloff found himself in charge of the unit entrusted with the re-capture of Lone Tree Hill from the Japanese on Saturday, October 15. The dash with which he accomplished his task is already matter of history. He captured the position, routed the Japanese, and took fourteen guns—the first actual trophies to fall into the hands of the Russians. His success saved a débâcle at Sha-ho. Reward quickly followed his triumph; he was promoted to general on the field, received the thanks of the Commander-in-Chief, and was decorated by an officer specially despatched to him by General Kuropatkin. The scene of his exploit is known for all time in the geography of the War as "Putiloff Hill."

General Putiloff, as I have known him, is a

man young enough to be a lieutenant, a genial companion, an officer of a startlingly unconventional nature—the real Baden Powell of the Russian army. His rapid advancement is the best possible proof that in the Russian army a career exists for men of grit and intelligence. It is true that, in the beginning of the War, many important positions were held by men who, for one reason or another, had interest to secure them appointment. The strong wind of battle is rapidly winnowing the wheat from the chaff, and the survival of such of the fittest as General Putiloff is the result. He is a man who has gained his position by sheer ability and capacity to act.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE LONG FEUD

THE consequences of the Russian campaign in Manchuria have not been confined to the Far East. They have shaken the Chancelleries of Europe. They have occasioned grave crises between Great Britain and Russia. Those misunderstandings have roused the peoples of both nations to exhibitions of intense feeling. The countries have been on the brink of war.

The reason for this is to be found rather in a tradition of enmity than in the incidents which ruffled the peace between the nations. In private life Britons and Russians are the best of friends; they draw closer to each other than the members of other European nations. In Russia most men of rank speak English, wear English clothes, and ride an English hunter. Their clubs are English in constitution and in name. Their habits in sport and in society are more English than those of the Germans or the French, yet all

this personal amity is accompanied by an intense national hostility. This hostility has been nurtured in both nations through the generations, had its birth in a policy and its sustenance in misapprehension.

When I passed through St Petersburg I had an opportunity for a prolonged conversation with one of the statesmen directly responsible for the foreign policy of Russia. His words made a deep impression upon me. He said:

"There is no cause of discord existing between Great Britain and Russia. Britain is a commercial nation, Russia is an agricultural nation. Our interests do not clash in any material sense, but there is a misapprehension widely existing in both countries which seriously endangers their relations. There is an impression in Britain that Russia plans to attack India. That is absolutely lacking in foundation. Russia possesses an ideal frontier in the Middle East and has no intention of interfering with it. If Britain would grant Russia a free hand in the Near East the mutual distrust of the nations would give place to a cordial friendship. There is no reason why an understanding should not be arrived at between Great Britain and Russia."

THE LONG FEUD

To understand the cause of the misapprehension existing between our nation and that of the Czar it is only necessary to trace its development throughout the last four centuries and a half.

In the days when Edward VI. was the Boy King of England, an expedition was fitted out to seek a way to China and India, round the North Cape and along the arctic shores of Russia. It was but a tiny fleet of three ships, and its captains, Willoughby and Chancellor, knew as little of their destination and of the route thither, as did Columbus when he crossed the bar of Palos, sixty-one years before.

Poor Willoughby and the crews of two of his vessels were frozen to death ere they had well crossed the threshold of the Arctic Ocean. Chancellor was more fortunate, and succeeded in making the White Sea. From its shores he journeyed to the court of the Czar, and was favourably received by Ivan the Terrible, the reigning Emperor. This was in 1553, and it was the first intercourse between England and Russia.

Ivan was at war with the Swedes, and was in much fear of his own subjects, so that he welcomed the self-appointed ambassador of the

English. To Chancellor he granted great trading privileges, and invited the English to come to his dominions, and there to build factories and to establish markets. The English, ever expansive, took him at his word, and much of Russia's commerce passed under the control of the men of the Thames and the Tyne.

Ivan, some few years later, sought to secure from Queen Elizabeth some return for his generosity, and wrote to her suggesting that "the queen's majestie and he might be to all their enemyes joyned as one, and that England and Russland might be in all manners as one." But the wary sovereign was well content with her commercial privileges in Russia, and had no ambition to assume the responsibilities of Ivan's quarrels. Her reply was diplomatic and non-committal.

Three years later, Ivan, being in one of his fits of madness, wrote an abject letter to Elizabeth, begging that she would accord him a safe retreat, should he be driven out from his empire.

It was in one of these desperate attempts to secure an alliance with England that Ivan instructed his envoy to secure for him an English

wife. His seventh had just died, and, like Henry VIII. of England, he was always lonely without a consort. The young and beautiful daughter of the Earl of Huntingdon offered herself as a prospective Czarina. The ambassador sent his imperial master glowing reports of her eligibility, and Ivan the Terrible despatched his royal offer of marriage. Unfortunately, gossip had travelled from Moscow to London, and the youthful Lady of Huntingdon shrank from the matrimonial extravagances of her suitor. She declined the proposal to be his eighth wife, and the possibility of a permanent alliance faded out of practical politics.

Not only were the prospective politics of Ivan's reign of interest to Englishmen, but the actualities were of grave moment to Great Britain. Ivan cast off, for ever, the Mongol yoke; conquered Novgorod, putting sixty thousand of its people to death; added Livonia, Esthonia, and Astrakhan to his empire; and, with the aid of the Cossack freebooter, Ermak, secured western Siberia. England had then no footing in India, or she might have striven harder to benefit by the overtures she received from this strenuous prince.

In the next reign—that of the feeble Feodor—Boris Godounof laid a firm hand on the new Siberian provinces, built Tobolsk in 1587, and founded Russia's Asiatic empire. A year later the Spanish Armada dashed itself to pieces on the rocky shores of Scotland and Ireland; and England, for the first time, took rank as the leading maritime power of Europe.

The Cossacks found the Siberias a vast vacuum, desolate, bare. In fifty years they penetrated, without once encountering a formidable foe, to the icy shores of the northernmost Pacific. Early in the seventeenth century they had established themselves upon the Amur, the great river that forms the northern boundary of Manchuria, and there they abode until the Manchu emperors expelled them in 1688. All this Russia accomplished without serious opposition. And England, as yet, had no Indian Empire.

In 1600, Queen Elizabeth granted a concession to certain London merchants, securing to them the monopoly of trade between the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn for fifteen years. In this way the East India Company gained control of the commerce of the Indian and

Pacific Oceans—a control it retained, in modified form, until the outbreak of the Indian mutiny in 1857.

In 1662, Charles II. of England gave the Company permission to "make war and peace with the native princes." By the close of the seventeenth century the East India Company had stations at Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay. Other nations possessing footholds in India were the Venetians, the Genoese, the Portuguese, the Dutch, and, a little later, the French; so that, until the end of the eighteenth century, England owned but an inconsiderable part of India. Her sovereignty was but that of a trading company up to the time of the Sepoy rebellion in 1858. It was not until the other day, on January 1, 1877, that India became an empire dependent upon Great Britain, and Queen Victoria was proclaimed Kaisar-i-Hind.

Already, centuries ago, Russia had set out on her great march to the sea. Peter, afterwards called the Great, became ruler of Russia in 1689. His country had never fully recovered from the effects of the Mongol invasion, four hundred years before. It had lost whatever of culture it might boast in the pre-Mongolian days, and

it was centuries behind contemporary States in civilisation. Such industries and manufactures as it had were exploited by Englishmen and other aliens. Peter realised the necessity of seeking open ports, of bursting a way to the sea, of dispersing the darkness of his land-bound empire.

A man of originality and enterprise, Peter chose a novel and energetic method of raising his countrymen to the Western standard. He encouraged his younger nobles to visit Holland and Italy, to study ship-building, to gain Western polish, and to disconnect themselves from the old traditions of Russia. Eager himself to take part in the great reform, he journeyed, in the guise of an inferior officer of an embassy, to the three Baltic provinces, to Prussia, to Hanover, and to Amsterdam. At Amsterdam and at Saardam he worked as a shipwright, gulping down information concerning everything he saw around him. On the invitation of William III. he next travelled to London, and in the yards of Deptford wrought once more as a shipbuilding journeyman.

From England he returned to Russia in April, 1698, carrying with him more than five hundred

English engineers, mechanics, surgeons, artisans and artillerymen. His commander-in-chief was Patrick Gordon, a Scotsman of Aberdeenshire, a soldier of fortune who had served under Alexia and Feodor, Peter's father and elder brother.

All this time British and Russian interests had never clashed. Russia's enemies were the Powers that stood between her and the open sea. In the Baltic, Sweden and Poland interposed themselves — and the Sweden of 1690 possessed Finland, Ingria, in which St Petersburg now stands, and the Baltic provinces. On the Black Sea, Turkey owned all the northern, western, and southern shores. The Caspian Sea was commanded by Persia. Peter had the White Sea, with its summer opening to the Arctic Ocean, as his only gateway to the world, and Archangel as his only port.

His first war, then, was against Turkey, with a view to securing the passage of the Black Sea. From the Sublime Porte he wrested the city of Azov, at the mouth of the Don, in 1696. In 1700 he entered into alliances with Poland and Denmark, and sought to tear from the infant Charles XII. of Sweden his provinces of Ingria and Carelia. But the hardy Swedes

routed his raw levies at Narva, and Peter was temporarily balked of his design to secure an opening to the Baltic.

Three years later, however, when Charles was busy making kings in Poland, Peter seized a portion of Ingria and at once founded there his capital, St Petersburg. On July 8, 1709, at Pultowa, he wiped out the disgrace of Narva, defeated Charles, and added the whole of the Baltic provinces and part of Finland to his empire. In 1722 he went to war with Persia, and gained from the Shah his three Caspian provinces, with the towns of Derbend and Baku. All the policy of this strongest Czar of Russia was to force pathways to the sea.

Meanwhile, Peter was not ignorant of the prodigious wealth of India. In 1713, Hodja Nefes, a Turcoman chief, came to him in St Petersburg with a tale of a great river of gold that once had flowed direct from the Pamirs to the Caspian Sea. According to Hodja Nefes, this river had been turned out of its original bed by the Khivans, and diverted into the Aral Sea, south of the Kirghiz steppes. Peter, ever alive to the value of navigable waters, determined to test the truth of this

traveller's tale, to send a mission to the Khan of Khiva, to survey the old and the new beds of the river, and to investigate how far it might be practicable to penetrate to India by water.

Peter entrusted the expedition to Prince Bekovitch Cherkaski, of his body-guard. In a preliminary reconnaissance Prince Bekovitch found that the wonderful river was the Oxus, and he succeeded in mapping a portion of its ancient course where it had fallen into the Caspian Sea at Krasnovodsk. With Prince Bekovitch marched four thousand regular infantry, two thousand Cossacks, and one hundred dragoons — as escort to a peaceful mission.

The Prince was instructed, after he had secured the submission of the Khan of Khiva, to despatch two trade caravans — one to the Khan of Bokhara, the other to the Great Mogul of India. The envoy to the Mogul received his instructions direct from Peter, and they are interesting enough to justify quotation:

"You will go, when the brigadier, Prince Cherkaski, shall be able to dispense with you, by water as far up the Amu-Daria (Oxus) as possible, or by such other streams as may fall

into it, to India, in the guise of a merchant, the real business being the discovery of a waterway to India. You will inquire secretly about the river, in case progress by water be forbidden. You will return, if possible, by the same route, unless it be ascertained that there is another and more convenient way by water; the waterway, as well as the land route, to be carefully observed and described in writing, and to be mapped. You will notice the merchandise, particularly aromatic herbs and other articles that are exported from India. You will examine into and write an account of all other matters which, though not mentioned here, may concern the interests of the nation."

In addition to its six thousand troops, the expedition carried two hundred sailors, with boats and all the necessary paraphernalia for the ascent of the Oxus, and the crossing of such rivers as it might meet in its way.

Bekovitch hurried his men across the burning steppes as best he might until, on August 15, 1717, he halted within a hundred miles of Khiva. There the Khivans, dubious of his assurances of friendship, attacked him. The Russians easily drove off the enemy, and the Khan once more became blind to the military aspects of the case. He invited Prince Bekovitch to meet him

at a point outside Khiva, entertained him at dinner—the meal being "enlivened by the strains of the Russian military band"—and proffered eternal friendship. Prince Bekovitch, eager to secure his entry to Khiva and to reach the point at which he should seize the Khan and his capital, accepted these overtures with joy.

The next day the Khan, with the Prince and his principal officers, marched, a harmonious company, to Khiva. The Khan regretted the inability of his capital to quarter so many troops, and begged Prince Bekovitch to divide his army into small companies for entertainment at the surrounding villages. The Prince consented, the Russian force was broken up, and the Khan's diplomacy was successful. He killed Bekovitch, and forwarded his head as a gift to the Khan of Bokhara; he massacred the scattered bodies of Russians; he stripped the officers naked and hacked them leisurely to pieces; and then he rode in triumph into Khiva, preceded by the hay-stuffed heads of two Russian princes belonging to Prince Bekovitch's escort.

So ended Russia's first attempt to penetrate to India. It gave the Muscovite peasant a new saying

—"To perish like Bekovitch"—but it brought the empire nothing more material than a wholesome respect for the strategy of the Turcoman in his native wilds.

In view of later expeditions, it is necessary to observe that Russia was as anxious to break through to India at a time when Britain was but one of many proprietors, as she has been—or has been supposed to be—since the whole Hindustan peninsula has become part of the British Empire. Russia desires free seaboard and an outlet to markets. All her policy can be read in the light of these two national aspirations. That Great Britain should find herself opposed to both propositions is as much an accident of geography as that Germany should rub shoulders with Russia from Memel to the Carpathians. The consequent antagonism is identical in both cases.

Russia might reach the Mediterranean through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles; but to secure that exit she must dispossess Turkey. She might break out to the Indian and Pacific Oceans through the Persian Gulf; but to attain that she must hold Persia. She can run her goods from St Petersburg to the Yellow Sea;

THE MASCOT OF THE FIGHTING ELEVENTH.

STRAGGLERS.

but to preserve that route she must own Manchuria.

Britain, on the other hand, has always been feverishly anxious to maintain—both in the old days of the overland passage, and in the present times of the Suez Canal—her road across the Isthmus of Suez to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. To permit the Czar to hold Constantinople and the free passage of the Dardanelles were to let Russia command her own gate to the East, and to force Britain to reach India only after rounding the Cape of Good Hope. To grant Russia a road to the sea through Persia were to destroy the buffer State that most effectively protects India. As to Manchuria, Lord Salisbury has said:

"Her British Majesty's Government has never entertained any objection to the existence of an outlet for Russian commerce upon the open waters of the China seas, by agreement, of course, with China."

Count Muravieff observed that "British and Russian interests cannot be seriously antagonistic in China."

Therein lie the causes of Anglo-Russian enmity. The antagonism of the two nations has

been a matter of slow growth, the result of the geographical expansion of both. In the reign of Peter the Great there was no rivalry. England had not then dreamed of an Indian Empire, and Russia was well content with her newly-acquired seaports on the Baltic. In her wars with Poland, Britain took no part. In the bloody Seven Years' War, it is true, Britain found herself allied with Prussia against Russia, Austria, and France; but the combinations on both sides were artificial. Pitt was forced to fight in defence of Hanover, threatened by France. The Czarina Catherine II. withdrew her army from the war, and in the expeditions against Turkey, Sweden, and Poland many British tars lent her navy efficient aid.

It was not until Paul became Czar, in 1796, that the opposition of Russia to Great Britain became a settled policy. At first Paul joined with the Austrians and British against France. A weak and flighty monarch, he was easily induced by Pitt to seize the opportunity for an introduction into the politics of Europe. Defeated in Switzerland, he withdrew from the coalition in disgust. To him came Napoleon, who, understanding the man, played upon his vanity, and

he declared war on Britain. Lord Nelson was on his way to engage the Russian fleet when news reached him of the assassination of Paul. Peace with the new Czar, Alexander I., was speedily concluded.

Paul was the first Russian emperor who projected an attack upon India solely because it belonged to Britain. Formerly, Russian expeditions in that direction had been attracted merely by the possibility of trade. Paul invited Napoleon to co-operate with him, and the alliance might have been effected but for affairs in Egypt which tied Napoleon's hands. As it was, Paul instructed General Orloff to march from Orenburg with twenty-two thousand Cossacks, forty-four thousand horses, and two companies of horse-artillery, against the English settlements on the Indus. His instructions were both definite and comprehensive:

"The English are preparing to attack me and my allies, the Swedes and Danes, by sea and by land. I am ready to receive them. But it is necessary also to attack them where the blow will be most felt and where it is least expected. You will therefore proceed to India."

Orloff had marched as far as the heights of

Irgiz, to the north of the Sea of Aral, when news of Paul's assassination ended the expedition.

Alexander I., having seen his army destroyed at Austerlitz, and having been, as he thought, basely deserted by the allies at Friedland, sought a meeting with Napoleon at Tilsit. The two emperors met on a raft in the middle of the Niemen, on July 7, 1807, and Alexander opened the conversation abruptly by saying, "I hate the English as you do."

Napoleon looked across at his old enemy and said, "Then peace is made."

A few days earlier the same Czar had written to George III. of England: "There can be no salvation for myself or for Europe but by interminable resistance to Buonaparte."

Yet the peace lasted five years, and Alexander and Napoleon had the pleasure of dividing in fancy the kingdoms of Europe between them.

No sooner was peace in the West insured by the battle of Waterloo than Alexander despatched General Yermoloff, Captain Muravieff, of the General Staff, and Major Ponomareff, to attempt once more to deal with the Khan of Khiva. The Khan, however, threw Muravieff into prison

and kept him there forty-eight days. Once more was Russian diplomacy balked.

Alexander I., however, had forced Russia into a leading place in the counsels of the Powers. By the Treaty of Paris, Britain had secured to herself the Cape of Good Hope, which she purchased from Holland, and Mauritius, captured from the French, so that India was well guarded from the south. Malta guaranteed her influence in the Mediterranean. But Russia had become so arrogant in the Concert of Europe that, at the Congress of Vienna, Britain joined with France and Austria in an agreement to oppose her wishes regarding Poland. In almost all of the great Congresses since then, Britain has found herself in complete antagonism to Russia.

Alexander, as the head of the Holy Alliance, thought he might act as the divinely appointed arbiter of Europe. With the sovereigns of Austria and Prussia, he sought, in the name of Christianity, to impose upon the nations the permanency of the existing dynasties. Against this doctrine George Canning, the British Foreign Minister, actively interposed. Alexander, with his imperial brothers of the Alliance, was seeking to govern Europe by Congresses; Canning

demonstrated the essential independence of Great Britain, and gave his country a policy which she only very recently abandoned — in obedience to the command of Japan. On the Continent there were triple alliances and dual alliances; Great Britain stood alone in self-sufficient isolation, preserving the balance of power and the peace of Europe.

At times this policy forced her into false positions. She had to support the Sick Man of Turkey against the noble attempts of Greece to regain her independence. She remained deaf to the cries of suffering Christians in the Balkans, lest the Powers should seize upon her interference as excuse to partition Turkey and so give Russia Constantinople. She fought the Crimean War and sacrificed thirty thousand men to prevent Russia from assuming the right to protect members of the Greek Church in Turkey; she ineffectually sought, at the Conference of Constantinople, in 1876, to force Turkey to respect the rights of the Bulgarian Christians; and when Russia went to their relief in 1877, Britain opposed that Power's demands at the conclusion of the war, and narrowly escaped once more embroiling herself in a costly conflict. Eventu-

ally, at the Congress of Berlin, Great Britain succeeded, with the support of the Powers, in building up a barricade of independent States that are to-day the hot-bed of intrigue in Europe.

All this was to prevent Russia reaching Constantinople, to secure Britain's road to India. The men who have fought hardest to preserve that route for Britain are George Canning, Lord Palmerston, Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Salisbury, and Lord Rosebery. With them also has lain the necessity of preserving between Russia and Britain that "peace with honour" which, at all times difficult, has sometimes been well-nigh impossible.

In Central Asia a constant war of intrigue between British and Russians has been maintained ever since the abortive mission of Prince Bekovitch in 1717. For long the British penetrated more easily to the various Khanates than did the Russians. This seriously alarmed the St Petersburg Government, which dreaded the supply of the Khivans and Turcomans with arms and ammunition by the East India Company, and the menacing of its own Asiatic frontier.

Consequently, in 1839, General Perofski was

despatched with five thousand men to make one more attack upon the Khan of Khiva, and "to prevent the influence of the East India Company, so dangerous to Russia, from taking root in Central Asia." He sought to cross the cruel steppes in winter, lost nearly all his camels, one-third of his men, and practically the whole of his provisions. He was forced to abandon his expedition; and Khiva remained unmolested until General Ignatieff made his attempt against it in 1858.

In the interim, the endeavour to form a neutral zone was urged by both Powers. Russia agreed to "leave the Khanates of Central Asia as a neutral zone interposed between the two empires, so as to preserve them from dangerous contact." Unfortunately, the agents of neither Power observe the neutrality, and intrigue progressed as merrily as ever. In the sixties and seventies, the Russians swarmed over Turkestan, swallowing up in their advance Khokand, Samarkand, Khiva, and Merv. In 1885, a joint commission was appointed to delimit the frontier between Afghanistan and Turkestan. The diplomatic negotiations came very near to a disastrous ending, and for a time the war-

cloud hung very low over London. A battle was actually fought between the Russians and the Afghans; but ultimately a frontier line was agreed upon, and Afghanistan was left as a buffer State, with a Russian military railway leading from the Caspian to its northern border.

In Persia, Russia has taken milder means. Four years ago it was my privilege to learn from His Highness the Sadr-Azan—the Keeper of the Shah's Conscience, the Grand Vizier—something of the movements of British and Russian diplomacy at Teheran. Russia displayed always the velvet glove, the soft tongue. Britain was brusque and overbearing. Russia advanced a loan to Persia that had been refused her by Britain, and received concessions of railways and trade in return.

There is a proverb that one can cut off a Persian's head with a piece of rice-paper, and his brother will salaam in gratitude; but behead him with a sword, and his brother will arise and smite. Russia has learned the application, and by soft words and specious deeds plotted Persia's destruction. Britain, eager to maintain the Shah's decrepit kingdom as an independent State between herself and Russia, failed to read

the Persian character, and, for the lack of a rose or a compliment, almost invited issue with Ivan Ivanovitch.

Statesmen too often forget that, after all, political opportunism is subordinate to natural law. The long feud between Great Britain and Russia has been due to the British endeavour to confine Russia within the limits of a land-locked empire. It were as possible to confine steam within a kettle lacking an aperture. Sooner or later Russia must break out to the sea. She has striven to find that opening in the Bosphorus and in the Persian Gulf, but Britain has opposed her. Following the natural law she has sought to expand along the line of least resistance. She has sought an opening in the waters of the China seas. It is difficult to see what crime Russia commits against the comity of nations in seeking an avenue for her development through Manchuria.

For centuries Manchuria has lain inert and unproductive in the hands of China. For generations Manchuria has lain open to the development of the great sea Powers. Had Great Britain or the United States or Germany taken the opportunity that lay open to their

hands to exploit Manchuria from the Gulf of Liao-Tung, their present-day attitude might be justified of its disapproval. They did not, and the territory lay a breeding-ground for brigands, an Alsatia for Chinese criminals.

It was not until the Trans-Siberian railway reached to the Baikal that the opportunity came to Russia to take part in the opening up of China. Once possessed of that opportunity she lost no time in grasping it.

Suddenly Japan found herself in the position that Britain had occupied since Pitt was Prime Minister in London. Ever since, she has sought to stay nature's law in Manchuria. If she succeed, Russia must seek her opening through one of the old channels so carefully sealed by Britain. To deny Russia the right to reach the open sea at one or other of the natural apertures, in the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, or the Yellow Sea, is an act of national murder as surely as to prevent a new-born child filling its lungs with air is infanticide.

Japan may close Russia's open ports in the China seas, but in so doing she will only force Russia back against her old-time enemy, Great Britain. It were well to realise this fact

in all its bearings, to recognise thus early that natural law is more absolutely immutable than ever was statute of Mede or Persian, to accept the inevitable and to come to terms with Russia when those terms can be most advantageous to Great Britain. Britain's blindness is Germany's opportunity.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE PROSPECT OF SETTLEMENT

CZAR NICHOLAS is a man of peace, hating bloodshed, desiring the industrial development of his people. General Kuropatkin is a soldier, at home on the battlefield, desiring the discomfiture of his enemy. The Czar would buy peace at any practicable cost. General Kuropatkin would wage war as long as a possibility of ultimate victory remained in prospect. The Czar must calculate cost, must consider the effect of the campaign upon his people and upon his dynasty. General Kuropatkin is concerned only with the ability of his army to meet and to defeat the enemy opposed to him. It may safely be conjectured that General Kuropatkin has not counselled a cessation of hostilities at this juncture.

In these circumstances it is important to understand the attitude of those other advisers

whom the Czar must consult before coming to a decision either to continue the War or to endeavour to come to terms with Japan now that Southern Manchuria has passed out of his hands. Before leaving Mukden, on August 17, I addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy Alexeieff a series of questions with reference to the bearing of the military operations upon Russia's policy in the Far East. From the beginning of the War Admiral Alexeieff steadfastly refused to be interviewed or to express any opinion to any journalist of any nationality whatsoever upon the situation. His replies to my queries therefore have the interest of novelty, as well as the merit of extreme lucidity.

Admiral Alexeieff, prior to the War, acclaimed Russia's right to a port in the warm waters of the China Seas, to an overland communication between that port and European Russia, to a share in the trade of the Far East. His policy with respect to these matters remained unchanged by the fortunes of the campaign. His policy was the Czar's policy.

With respect to the duration of the struggle, the Imperial Lieutenant in the Far East would wage the War to an absolute finish. He would

not be affected by foreign opinion or by foreign intervention. He did not seek the War, he did not expect the War; but the War, once entered upon, must continue until it reached its natural termination in the triumph of Russia. The events of the opening campaign only served to confirm Russia in her policy.

I asked His Excellency if, in the event of the fall of Port Arthur, Russia would accept terms of peace which precluded the Russian occupation of the port.

The Viceroy's reply was definite and categorical: "The Russian occupation of Port Arthur is a *sine quâ non* to the discussion of terms of peace."

I then asked the Admiral if there were any likelihood that Russia, at this date, would be prepared to grant the stipulations contained in Japan's final note to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The answer again was absolute in its decision:

"Russia will not, and cannot, reconsider the conditions laid down in Japan's final note to His Excellency Count Lamsdorff, because that note contains such claims as could not be admitted by any independent Power."

In conclusion, I asked the Viceroy if Russia was prepared to accept a new delimitation of territory at the termination of hostilities.

He replied: "Russia will not be content with any frontier less favourable to her than the previous one—the frontier existing at the beginning of the War."

Such are the opinions of the man entrusted by the Czar with the administration of affairs in the Far East. Since then he has ceased to act as Viceroy in Manchuria. The man has been withdrawn, but his policy continues. Admiral Alexeieff is a strong man, silent and purposeful, firmly controlling the forces around him. In no sense was he the weak and fretful administrator the European Press painted him. His opinions were the opinions of a man with perspective, of the one being in whom centred all the threads of influence bearing upon the Russian situation in Manchuria. At the same time His Excellency confined his opinion strictly within his powers as "Imperial Lieutenant in the Far East." For the tendency of the Imperial policy he referred me to the Foreign Office in St Petersburg.

On my way westward I travelled for a time with a nobleman of peculiarly enlightened views,

THE WEARY ROAD TO HOSPITAL.

CHINESE UNDER FIRE.

a man of the governing classes, an officer closely attached to the person of the Czar. He, too, averred that the War must proceed. His words shed a new light upon the situation:

"This War," he said, "in many respects—political as well as military—resembles your South African War. There is grave question in the minds of many as to whether, after all, Manchuria is worth the expenditure of men and treasure we are lavishing upon it. In one important respect, however, the situation differs from that which existed in England in 1900 and 1901—we have no Stop-the-War Party in Russia. The War must be fought to a finish. Here, in Russia, we have a large middle class of shopkeepers, and mechanics, and the upper peasantry—the people who read the newspapers. Those folk are watching the War with the keenest interest. To them it is a demonstration and a test. To the nobility, the War is the fulfilment of a policy. To the peasantry it is a misfortune as are droughts and floods. To the great class of the semi-educated the War is a trial of Russia's stability of purpose. If the War were concluded now on a compromise we

should have a revolution in Russia—a revolution of the half-instructed."

In Moscow, the industrial capital of Russia, I met and talked with the men whose pockets most seriously are affected by the War. Business is at a standstill, factories are closed, but there is no Party of Compromise. "Let it go on," said the cynically minded, "let it go on. The War is costing us dear, but the result will justify the expense—the result will be that we shall gain a constitution!"

In St Petersburg I sought confirmation of Viceroy Alexeieff's views at the Foreign Office. My informant was concise and definite.

"The War has had no influence upon Russia's policy in the Far East. We were not prepared for war — even now we have insufficient forces in Manchuria — but we shall give General Kuropatkin whatever he requires in men and munitions. Russia will not accept, at this time, intervention from any foreign Power or group of Powers, *c'est tout à fait impossible.*"

I asked if Russia would consider terms of peace should Port Arthur fall into the hands of the enemy.

The answer expressed a policy, and a deter-

mination: "Port Arthur is Russian. Port Arthur must remain Russian."

Slowly Russia is waking to the actuality of things in Manchuria. With her waking comes Japan's great peril. So long as Russia flicked lazily at the enemy upon her far-stretched flank Japan could astound the world with the intrepidity of her attack. When Russia deigns to deal seriously with her antagonist a new page in history will be turned. General Kuropatkin has the nation at his back, a nation steadfast in determination, united in its realisation of the need to press on the War.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE AFTERMATH

To me, as a Scotsman, there is a soothing restfulness in a chapter of the Bible, a tender motherliness in its precepts. The familiar phrasings lull one as the crooning of cushats. Its passages are as the miniatures of dead friends, instinct with recollections. Seeing them my fancy wanders back over the soft green haughs of the rushing hill-stream, through the gate by the corner of the graveyard, silently across the mown turf of the minister's glebe to the little kirk by the roadside. There, each God's day, I sat and listened, and tried to measure the great world that lay beyond the hill, away from the water-gate of my childhood.

Since then I have been out in the great world, have struggled and suffered, and longed for the peace that reigned in that little God's-acre; so that now, when all the world is black, the old

homesickness comes back to me, I turn to the twenty-third Psalm, and am once more but a bairn by the burnside.

It is in one of these searchings for comfort that to-night I recall a passage which brings other thoughts, which carries me away to the sun-baked steppes of Siberia, to the women waiting the men who never return from the battlefield. Such as it is I give it to you: "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted because they are not."

The lapse of nineteen hundred years has changed the aspect of war as much as, in the manner of her grief, the ruddy-faced Russian peasant woman differs from Rachel of Palestine; but in their common sorrow the woman of Jerusalem and the woman of Cheliabinsk are one. The Jewish matron tore her hair and covered herself with sackcloth and ashes, while the Russian woman goes about her daily business dry-eyed and stiff-lipped—yet in her heart she, too, cannot be comforted because her children are not.

The men are gone from the fields in Siberia,

and their place is taken by the women and the half-formed striplings. There are no casualty lists in Russia, and little news to dribble through from the theatre of war. The men die when a troop train carries them away from the little roadside station in Siberia. Their names are wiped out from the commune, and no man may tell under what mouldy mound in Manchuria their bones lie rotting.

One day, on my journey homeward, when the rain had danced all night on the roof of my *coupé*—fiendish fandangoes that drove one in sympathetic memory to the men under canvas on the plains—I rose shortly after daybreak to celebrate its cessation. Mud there was everywhere, the glutinous, coal-black silt of the Siberian prairie, and I gazed over it to the group of women at the railway station. A long row of little wooden booths stood counter-deep in the mud. In each was a Russian peasant woman, sometimes two, always a puling infant; but there was no man, and the people in the train refrained from reference to the absent ones.

Gowned in all the colours of the rainbow promiscuously hurled, with her sallow, wrinkled face set far back in her shawl, the Siberian

peasant wife sat eyeing the crowd. Before her on the board were the eggs, the cucumbers, and the milk she had brought to market. Long before day-dawn she had started slowly townward, jumbled over the streams, racked across the ruts—to bring a dozen eggs to market.

The peasant woman must have news of the men-folk gone to the War, and the station market was her only opportunity. What money her man had left lay sacred in the family stocking; the eggs and the cucumbers were her due pin-money, and with them she bought the tallow taper that would consecrate a prayer for those gone south to battle.

When their stock was sold, those grim, unlovely women clambered heavily back from their booths, slowly resumed their interrupted toilet. Crowded station-yard or solitary prairie brought no blush to their cheek, and they braided their hair in the full presence of the travellers without sign of embarrassment. Blushes are the luxury of the rich and the graces of the light-hearted. The heavy-eyed peasant women had no need of such fopperies, and despised them.

Then back again to the silent huts and com-

munes lumbered the women. They are not beautiful these Russian women, nor promising candidates for romance, but they are the backbone of the Russian resistance in Manchuria. On them falls the slow sorrow of the War. The politics of the War is in other hands, but the prosecution of it rests in great part with the women. Quietly, unostentatiously, heroically, the work goes on in the dirty, wooden-walled hovels. In every homestead are a vacant chair and a pair of dusty, untenanted field-boots — memorials of the man at the War. These still the heedless question, or set the weary-eyed wife bustling about unnecessary duties what time the children's laugh comes screaming across the yard.

Down there in the camps are laughter and horse-play, gossip of the day, and lazy garrison duty, quick scurryings out to battle and rapid rushings back again, to relieve the memory of the comrade buried yesterday. Up here in the Siberian farm there is only a great silence peopled with the ghosts of a loving woman's fancy, only a great loneliness when the stragglers from the Front bring back word of the shot that made her a widow.

The Russian Rachel works hard for her

orphans, spends little time in weeping for the children that are not; but the heart beneath her apron is as heavy as ever was that of Jewish mother under her gabardine. The irony of war has entered into her soul.

Until I, too, had gone out to battle, it was matter of surprise that old soldiers talked much of war, but little of the actuality of battle. Their speech was all of the movement of troops, the massing of batteries, the tactical blunders of Generals. Their most intimate conversation was but a formal recital, a *rechauffé* of official reports.

It was not till I had stood in the Awful Presence, had realised the pathos of arms and legs stiffened at impossible angles, the tragedy in the litter of a battlefield, in its torn letters, its fingered photographs, its scattered keepsakes, that I knew why the veteran shrouds his memory of the reality of war. Now that I know, I appreciate his silence.

It is in the little things one feels the awfulness of war, the sacrilege of battle. One is startled by the humanity of soldiers, by their talk of home, of their loves and affections. One does not associate the soldier with the husband and the father, with the lover hungering for his mistress

over-seas. And yet these are the things that impress one when the burial parties are ordered out. Everywhere there is a terrible insistence upon the man within the uniform. The dead hands clutch upon tender love-messages, upon battered trinkets, upon the laboured scrawls of infants sending their love to Daddy at the war.

These things are not told in the histories. They are the reasons veterans do not speak of battle as they have known it.

And yet, tragic as is the scene of every engagement, there is to me a deeper tragedy in the faces of the women at home, in the feverish haste with which they scan the list of casualties in the newspapers, the pathetic diffidence with which they make inquiries at the War Office or the regimental depôts. There is no heroism in war to transcend the patient waiting of the soldier's wife. Hers is the most moving, though silent, argument against war I wot of.

In Russia the suffering of the soldier's wife has added to it a universal uncertainty that links the widow with the wife. There are no official returns of the dead and wounded once Ivan Ivanovitch has gone to war. The woman at home knows nothing till, haply, a fever-stricken comrade from

the Front comes back with news of disease and death.

One evening I was pacing slowly to and fro athwart the station platform at Irkutsk, thinking regretfully, yet philosophically, of the thousands of gallant dead upon the plains of Liao Yang, when a woman's quick sob at my elbow pulled me out of my smug meditation into the reality of death and suffering. She was a poor woman, decently dressed in black, with a puling infant, swaddled in a shawl, close-huddled to her bosom. I followed her along the creaking platform, watching her as she passed through the glare from the windows of the buffet into the blackness of the intervening shadows. Creeping into the station hall she paused for a moment irresolute, with wide-open, dumb, imploring eyes, seeking for comfort yet expecting none. Seeing me she tendered a card she had carried in her tight-clenched mother's hand. It was a postcard with a gaudy representation in blue, and red, and yellow, of a giant Russian guardsman bayonetting a wizened Japanese. Beneath it were scrawled a few words in Russian. To me she murmured something in the language of the people, and I, for the thousandth time, murmured my stock

phrase in reply: "Ne pahneemahyoo pahrooskee" —"I do not understand Russian."

There was a friend of mine, a long-coated captain of artillery, clanking impatiently up and down the room. I led her to him and explained my inability to assist her in her trouble. He was a big, loud-voiced man, newly back from the bluster and brutality of battle. He glared for a moment at the woman who dared to interrupt his musing, but out of courtesy to me took the card and studied it. The heavy figures of peasants stretched upon the floor watched wonderingly. A railway official hurried about his business.

The officer shifted uneasily, cleared his throat, rearranged his sword-belt. The woman stood patiently waiting. His voice had grown strangely soft when he answered in Russian that even I could understand: "Your husband was killed at Tashichao on July the eleventh." The salt despair was welling out of the woman's eyes as he spoke. "Yes, my child—he has done his duty—to his Czar."

The officer crossed himself, and a broken figure in rusty black went tottering blindly down the steps into the fog and darkness of Irkutsk.

My captain of artillery sought in his sleeve-cuff

SIULINTSE.

THE RETREAT.

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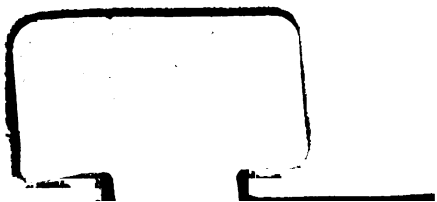
for his handkerchief, speaking angrily the while as though some one had insulted him:

"She could not read. God! sir, it is like sentencing a man to be hanged to answer such a question. God help the women and children!"

And he, too, strode into the darkness.

THE END

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